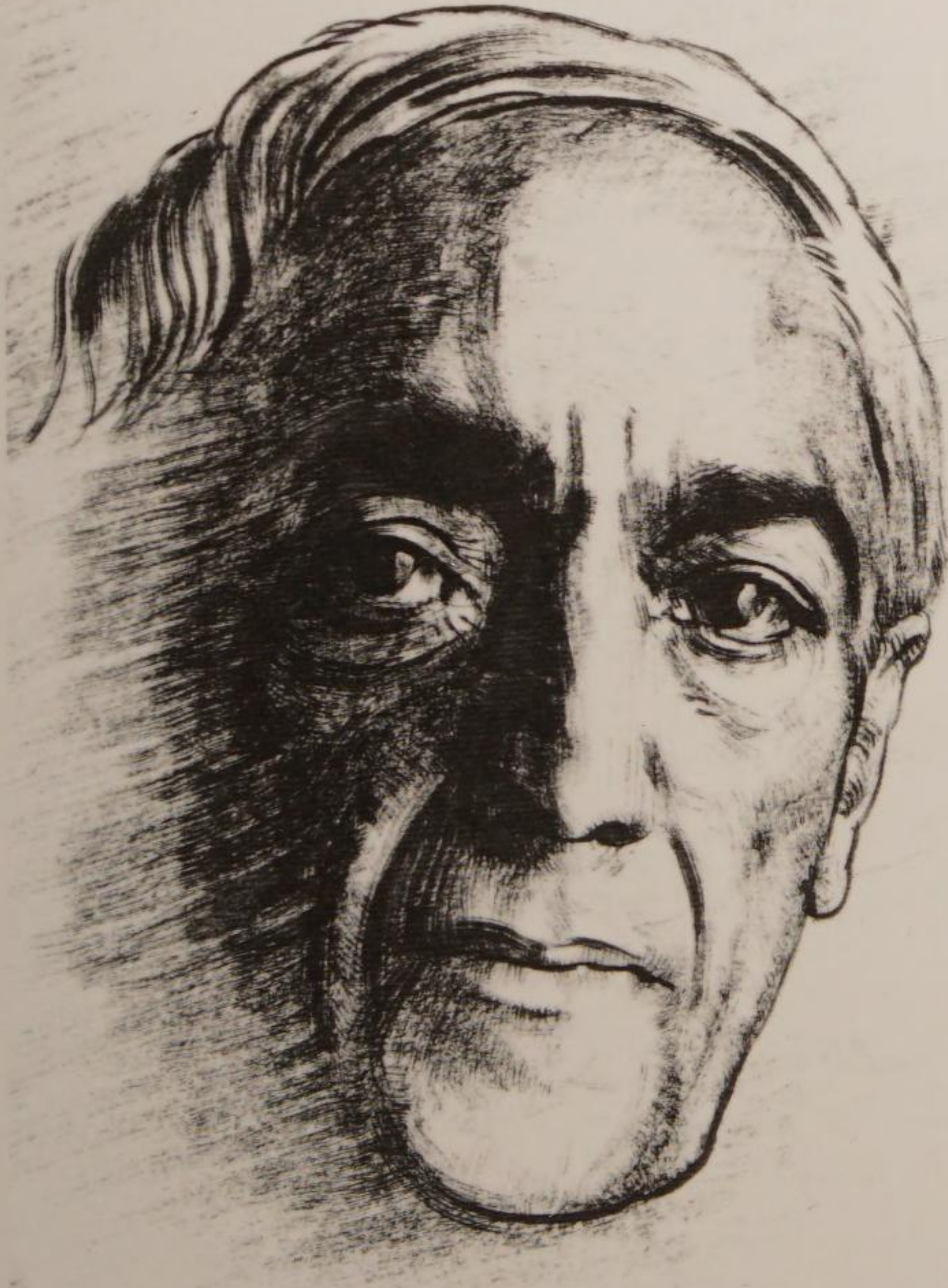
Individual & Society

A Study Book of the Teachings of J. KRISHNAMURTI



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The Bondage of Conditioning

A Selection of Passages
from the Teachings of
J. Krishnamurti

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10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3

Contents

Foreword 1

Introduction 3

Talking things over together as two friends . . .

I. **An Overview** 5

II. **What Is the Individual? What Is Society? What Is the Relationship between Them?** 17

III. **The Importance of the Individual** 27

IV. **The Bondage of Conditioning** 31

Introduction 31
What is conditioning? 34
Factors of conditioning 37

V. **Problems of Unconditioning** 43

VI. **Wrong Approaches to Unconditioning** 49

Desire, will, effort, choice 49
Power and authority 52
Reform 56
Analysis 58
Methods, systems, patterns 61
Self-improvement 62

VII. **Can the Mind Ever Free Itself from Its Conditioning?** 69
Introduction 69
Freeing the mind from conditioning 76
Krishnamurti's approach 77
1. Awareness, attention 82
2. Self-knowledge (self-knowing) 84
3. Meditation 89

VIII. **Krishnamurti on Right Education:** 101
Excerpts from talks to students, parents, and teachers, Rajghat School, India, 1952
Finding one's vocation 106
Fear and discipline 109
Education and freedom 111

IX. **Krishnamurti on War and Peace** 115

X. **In Summation** 123

Bibliography 127

Foreword

The passages in this volume have been taken directly from Krishnamurti's talks and books from 1933 through part of 1967. The compilers began by reading all the passages from this period which contained the words *individual, society,* or *conditioning,* the themes of this book. This would not have been possible without the use of a full-text computer database, the "Krishnamurti Text Collection," produced by the Krishnamurti Foundation Trust of England.* Over 900 passages were studied in all.

The material selected has not been altered from the way it was originally printed except for limited editing of spelling, punctuation, missing words, and, in several passages from *Commentaries on Living*, the addition of the titles QUESTIONER and KRISHNAMURTI. Words or phrases that appear in brackets are not Krishnamurti's but have been added by the compilers for the sake of clarity. Ellipses introducing a passage, or ending it, indicate that the passage begins or ends in mid-sentence. Ellipses in the course of a passage indicate the omission of words or sentences. Captions, set off from the body of the text, have been used with many passages. They are statements taken directly from the text.

*This database is available to the public in a CD-Rom format. Please contact the Krishnamurti Foundation of America for details.

Krishnamurti spoke from such a large perspective that his whole vision was implied in any extended passage. If one wishes to see how a statement flows out of his whole discourse, one can find the context through references at the foot of each passage. Primarily, these refer to talks which were published in 1992 as *The Collected Works of J. Krishnamurti.* The seventeen volumes cover the entire period from which this study book has been drawn. A complete bibliography of sources used is included at the end of the book.

Albion W. Patterson, Editor

Introduction

Talking things over together as two friends . . .

In a few days we are going to have discussions, and we can start those discussions this morning. But, if you assert and I assert, if you stick to your opinion, to your dogma, to your experience, to your knowledge, and I stick to mine, then there can be no real discussion because neither of us is free to inquire. To discuss is not to share our experiences with each other. There is no sharing at all; there is only the beauty of truth, which neither you nor I can possess. It is simply there.

To discuss intelligently, there must also be a quality not only of affection but of hesitation. You know, unless you hesitate, you can't inquire. Inquiry means hesitating, finding out for yourself, discovering step by step; and when you do that, then you need not follow anybody, you need not ask for correction or for confirmation of your discovery. But all this demands a great deal of intelligence and sensitivity.

By saying that, I hope I have not stopped you from asking questions! You know, this is like talking things over together as two friends. We are neither asserting nor seeking to dominate each other, but each is talking easily, affably, in an atmosphere of friendly companionship, trying to discover. And in that state of mind we do discover, but I assure you, what we discover has very little importance. The important thing is to discover and, after discovering, to keep going. It is detri-

mental to stay with what you have discovered, for then your mind is closed, finished. But if you die to what you have discovered the moment you have discovered it, then you can flow like the stream, like a river that has an abundance of water.

Saanen, 10th Public Talk, August 1, 1965
Collected Works, Vol. XV, p. 245

I. An Overview

It must be fairly obvious to most people that there must be throughout the world a tremendous revolution—a revolution not of words, not of ideas, not the exchange of beliefs or dogmas, but a change, a total mutation in thought. Because, in the world, which is our world—the world we live in, the world that you and I inhabit—the companions, the relationships, the work, the ideas, and the beliefs and the dogmas that we hold have produced a monstrous world, a world of conflict, misery, and perpetual sorrow. There is no denying it. Though every one of us is aware of this extraordinary state of things in the world, we accept it as a normal condition, we put up with it day after day; we never inquire into the necessity, the urgency of a revolution that is neither economical nor political but much more fundamental. And it is that we are going to discuss, we are going to talk about together, to explore together, during these three weeks.

But, to explore, there must be freedom. To explore really, deeply, lastingly, you must leave your books, your ideas, your traditions because, without freedom, no exploration is possible. No inquiry is ever possible when the mind is tethered to any kind of dogma, to a tradition, to a belief, and so on. The difficulty with most of us is not that we are not capable of inquiring, not that we are incapable of investigating, but we are apparently totally incapable of letting things go, putting things aside,

and therefore with a fresh mind, with a young mind, with an innocent mind, looking at the world and all the appalling things that are taking place in it.

To investigate, to inquire into all the questions that touch our lives—death, birth, marriage, sex, relationship, if there is or if there is not something beyond the measure of the mind, what is virtue—that requires freedom to pull down, because it is only when you can destroy completely everything that you have held sacred or right or virtuous that you can find out what is truth. We are going to inquire into everything, question everything, tear down the house that man has built through the centuries to find out what is truth. And that requires freedom, a mind capable of inquiring, a mind which is serious. I mean by *seriousness* a quality of pursuing a thought to the very end, a questioning that is not afraid to face the consequences. Otherwise, there is no inquiry; otherwise, there is no investigation. We remain merely on the surface and play with words, with ideas. And if one has observed sufficiently the things that are happening—not only mechanically, technically, but also in our relationships between people—when one observes that progress throughout the world is denying freedom, when one observes the strength of society in which the individual has completely ceased to be, and when one observes how nationalities are dividing themselves more and more, especially in this unfortunate country, one will see that some kind of deep revolt must come about.

It seems to me that the first thing to inquire into is society—what is the structure, and what is the nature of society—because we are social beings. You cannot live by yourself; even if you withdraw into the Himalayas, or become a hermit or a *sannyasi,* you cannot live by yourself; you are in relationship with another, and relationship with another creates the structure which we call *society*. That structure

controls relationship, that is, you and I have relationship, we are in communion with each other; in that communion, in that relationship, we create, we build a structure called *society*. That society controls our minds, shapes our hearts, shapes our actions, whether you live in a communist society or a Hindu society or a Christian world. Society with its structure shapes the mind of every human being, consciously or unconsciously. The culture in which we live—the traditions, the religions, the politics, the education—all that, the past as well as the present, shapes our thought. And to bring about a complete revolution—there must be a revolution, a crisis in consciousness—you must question the structure of society. . . .

We are not dealing with ideas, we are not dealing with various beliefs or dogmas. We are concerned with bringing about a different action, a different mind, a different entity as a human being; and to go into that really, profoundly, we must not be slaves to words. This is very important to understand right from the very beginning because the word is never the thing. The word *bird* is not the bird: they are two different things. But most of us are satisfied with the word, and not with seeing beyond the word. We are satisfied to call ourselves *individuals* and talk of society and the structure of society, but is there an individual at all? Because, we are the result of environmental influence, we are the society, we are the result of that structure which we call society. It is only when you completely, totally, break away from society that you are an individual, but you are not now an *individual* at all; you are the result of your environmental influence. You are being brought up as a Hindu, as a Buddhist, or what you will; you are the result of the influence of a particular society. So, we must be greatly aware of the influence of words and discover for ourselves to what extent, to what depth, we are slaves to words.

These meetings, these gatherings, are not entertainment; they are not propaganda; they are not for an exchange of ideas. But what we are concerned with, essentially and deeply, is to bring about a radical, religious revolution. And that requires a tremendous investigation into oneself; that requires a questioning of everything that man has built—every attitude, every value, every tradition, every relationship—and we are going to do that; we are not going to leave one stone unturned. There is nothing holy, there is nothing sacred. And therefore, to investigate, you need a very sharp, clear, precise mind—not a mind befogged with ideas, with words, with sentiments. And, to think very clearly, there must be freedom; otherwise, you cannot think freely. If you are a Hindu or a Parsi or what you will, if that is the basis of your thought—or from that you begin to think—it is absolutely impossible to think because you are not free. So, the first essential necessity of inquiry is freedom because then you can begin to question. . . .

There are two ways of questioning the whole process of living. One is questioning with a motive, which seeks a result, which is a response, which is a reaction; therefore, you will not find the truth of that questioning. The other is questioning without a motive, without seeking an answer—and that is what we are going to do. The moment you seek an answer, it will invariably be a conclusion of words, but not of facts.

We are going to question the whole structure of society. We are going to question the whole relationship of man and man, his relationship with ideas, with his conceptual existence, his abstractions, his everyday conduct. And, out of this questioning, we shall discover for ourselves what we actually are. Because, without knowing yourself, you cannot go very far; without knowing what you are, consciously or unconsciously, what you think, what you feel, every movement of ideas, every feeling; without uncovering, without discovering and understanding the processes, the motives, the impulses, the

compulsions, the frustrations, the failures, the hopeless loneliness, despairs, anxieties, guilt, you cannot go very far. That is the foundation and that requires freedom.

Freedom is not at the end but at the beginning, so as to be capable of looking at yourselves actually as you are, what you are in your relationship—and that relationship is the structure of society. There must be a complete change in our relationship, because all relationship is action. Relationship is action, and your relationship is mostly based on an idea. Your relationship with your wife is not an idea, but your relationship with your neighbor, with your country, with your gods, is an idea. . . .

So, society is relationship. And that social structure, as it is now, is based on ambition, greed, envy, seeking power, position, prestige, and all the things that man has set up as extraordinarily significant in life. That is the actual fact—not your gods, not the Gita, not your guru, not your saints and saviors, but the daily life in which you are, which is your ambition, your greed, your envy, your pursuit of power and wealth and position which you want. And, without altering that radically, without breaking down the whole system, you cannot have a religious revolution. A religious revolution is the only revolution that has significance because every other revolution has failed. The French and the communist revolutions have completely, totally failed because those revolutions were reactionary revolutions; they were a reaction against *what is*. . . . A religious revolution is not concerned with reaction at all. It is concerned with dealing with a fact and destroying that fact, that is, being aware that our relationship, that our social structure is based on this extraordinary sense of values—on ambition, greed, envy—and destroying that completely in ourselves, totally, wholly eradicating it. That is the beginning of a religious revolution—not the pursuit of an idea, which you call *God*.

Without laying the foundation, how can you go far, how can you find out if there is something beyond words, beyond divisions, beyond the conditioning of man? Surely, sirs, this thing which we call the morality of society—which admits that you can be ambitious, envious, greedy, powerful, and all the rest of it, which it calls moral—you pursue; and how can you, with that morality, with that virtue, find something which is beyond all virtue, which is beyond all time?

There *is* something beyond all time; there *is* something immeasurable, timeless; but, to find that, to uncover that, you must lay the foundation; and to lay the foundation you must shatter society. I mean by *society* not the outward structure, not blowing up buildings, not discarding clothes and putting on a *sannyasi's* robe or becoming a hermit—that does not break down society. When I talk about society, I mean the psychological structure, the inward structure of our minds, of our brain, the psychological processes of our thinking; those need to be completely destroyed to find out, to create a new mind. You need a new mind because, if you observe what is taking place in the world, you will see more and more that freedom is being denied by the politicians, by progress, by organized religions, by mechanical, technical processes. More and more the computers are taking over the function of man, and they are quite right to do that. Virtue is being brought about by chemicals: by taking a certain chemical, you can be free of anger, irritability, vanity; you can make your mind quiet by taking a tranquilizer, and you can become very peaceful. So, your virtue is being changed by chemicals; you don't have to go through all the tyranny of discipline in order to be virtuous. All that is going on in the world. And so, to bring about a new world, not chemically, not industrially, not politically, but spiritually if I may use that word *spiritually*—so hackneyed, so spoiled by the politicians, by the religious beings. You cannot be spiritual if you belong to any religion, to any nationality. If you call

yourself a Hindu, a Buddhist, a Parsi, a Muslim, or a Christian, you can never be spiritual. You can only be spiritual when you destroy the social structure of your being, which is the world in which you live: the world of ambition, greed, envy, seeking power. For most of us, that world is reality, and nothing else; it is that which we all want; from the highest politician to the lowest person in the street, from the biggest saint to the daily worshipper—that is what everybody wants. And, without breaking that, do what you will, you will have no love, you will be no nearer happiness, you will always have conflict, misery.

So, as I said, we are going to inquire into the structure of society. The structure of society is brought about through thought; the structure of society has resulted in the brain, which we now have—the brain which is now used to acquire, to compete, to become powerful, to gain money crookedly or rightly. The brain is the result of the society in which we live, the culture in which we are being brought up, the religious prejudices, dogmas, beliefs, traditions; all that is the brain, which is the result of the past. Please examine yourself, please do not merely listen to what is being said.

You know, there are two ways of listening. One way is: you merely hear the words and pursue the meaning of words—which is to listen, to hear comparatively, which is to compare, which is to condemn, translate, interpret what is being said. That is what most people do; that is how we listen. When something is said, your brain immediately translates it as a reaction into your own terminology, into your own experiences; and you either accept what pleases or reject what does not please. You are merely reacting, you don't listen. And then there is the other way of listening, and that requires immense attention because in that listening there is no translation, there is no interpretation, no condemning, no comparison; you are just listening with all your being. A mind that is capable of so attentively listening understands immediately; it is free of time

and of the brain which is the result of the social structure in which we have been brought up. As long as that brain has not become completely still but is intensely alive, active, every thought, every experience is translated by that brain according to its conditioning, and therefore every thought, every feeling prevents total inquiry, total investigation.

Look, sirs, the majority of people who are listening here are either Parsis, Hindus, or Christians. You have been told you are a Hindu, from your childhood; that memory is held through association in the brain cells; and every experience, every thought is translated according to that conditioning; and that conditioning prevents your total understanding of life. Life is not the life of a Hindu or of a Christian; life is something much more vast, much more significant, which a conditioned mind cannot possibly understand. Life is going to the office; life is sorrow; life is pleasure; life is this extraordinary sense of beauty; life is love; life is grief, anxiety, guilt—the totality of all that. And, without understanding that, you cannot find. There is no way out of sorrow. And, to understand the totality of life, the brain has to be completely quiet—the brain which is conditioned by the culture in which you have been brought up, by every thought which is the reaction to your memory, by every experience which is the response to a challenge, the response of the past, which is all centered in the brain. Without understanding this whole process, the brain can never be quiet. And, to bring about a new mind, it is absolutely essential for the brain to understand itself, to be aware of its own responses, to be aware of its own dullness, stupidity, conditioned influence. The brain must be aware of itself, and therefore it must question itself without seeking an answer because every answer will be projected from its own past. And, therefore, when you question seeking an answer, the answer is still within the boundaries of the conditioned mind, the conditioned brain. Therefore, when you question—that is when you are aware of

yourself, of your activities, of your ways of thinking, feeling, of the way you talk, of the way you move, of everything else—don't seek an answer, but look at it, observe it. And then out of that observation you will see that the brain begins to lose its conditioned state. And, when you do that, then you are out of society. So, inquiry, investigation, is into yourself, first and foremost—not into what Shankara, Buddha, or your guru has told you, but inquiry into yourself—into the ways of your mind, of your brain, into the ways of your thought.

And mutation is different from change. Please, listen, give your attention. Change implies time, change implies gradualness, change implies a continuity of what has been, but mutation implies a complete breaking and something new taking place. Change implies time, effort, continuity: a modified change that implies time. In mutation there is no time, it is immediate. We are concerned with mutation and not with change. We are concerned with a complete cessation of ambition immediately, and the immediacy of breaking down ambition is mutation—immediately, not admitting time.

We will discuss this further as we go on. But just capture the significance of this: we have so far lived through centuries of time, gradually changing, gradually shaping our minds, our hearts, our thoughts, our feelings; in that process we have lived constantly in sorrow, constantly in conflict; there has never been a day, there has never been a moment of complete freedom from sorrow, and sorrow has always been there, hidden, suppressed. And now what we are talking about is complete ending and therefore total mutation, and that mutation is the religious revolution. We are going to explain it a little this evening.

What is important to understand is the quality of seeing, the quality of listening. There are two ways of seeing—only two ways. Either you see with knowledge, with thought, or

you see directly without knowledge, without thought. When you see with knowledge, with thought, what is actually taking place is that you are not seeing, but you are merely interpreting, giving opinions, preventing yourself from seeing. But when you see without thought, without knowledge—which does not mean that, when you see, your mind becomes blank; on the contrary, you see completely—that seeing is the ending of time, and therefore there is immediate mutation. For instance, if you are ambitious, you say you will gradually change—that has been the habit which society approves. Society has invented all kinds of ways and means to get rid of your ambition slowly, and yet at the end of your life you are still ambitious, you are still in conflict—which is so utterly infantile, immature. What is maturity is to face the fact and end it immediately. And you can end it immediately when you observe the fact without thought, without knowledge.

Knowledge is the accumulation of the past, from which thought springs, and therefore thought is not the way to bring about mutation: thought prevents mutation. Please, you have to go into this very carefully, not just accept it or deny it. I am going into it during these talks, but first just capture the significance, the perfume of it. . . . What we are concerned with is immediate ending so that a new mind can come into being.

And you need a new mind because a new world has to be created—not by the politicians, not by the religious people, not by the technicians, but by you and me who are just ordinary average persons, because it is we that have to change completely, it is we that have to bring about a mutation in our minds and hearts. That can be brought about immediately only when you can see the fact and remain with the fact—not try to find excuses, dogmas, ideals, escapes, but remain with the fact totally, completely. Then you will see that complete seeing ends the conflict. Conflict must end. It is only when the mind is completely quiet, and not in a state of conflict—it is only

then that the mind can go very far into the realms that are beyond time, beyond thought, beyond feeling.

Bombay, 1st Public Talk, February 21, 1962
Collected Works, Vol. XIII, pp. 113-18

II. What is the Individual? What is Society? What is the Relationship between Them?

Obviously, society exists for the individual, and not the other way round. Society exists for the fruition of man; it exists to give freedom to the individual so that he may have the opportunity to awaken the highest intelligence.

We were walking along a crowded street. The sidewalks were heavy with people, and the smell of exhaust from the cars and buses filled our nostrils. The shops displayed many costly and shoddy things. The sky was pale silver, and it was pleasant in the park as we came out of the noisy thoroughfare. We went deeper into the park and sat down.

He was saying that the State, with its militarization and legislation, was absorbing the individual almost everywhere, and that worship of the State was now taking the place of the worship of God. In most countries the State was penetrating into the very intimate lives of its people; they were being told what to read and what to think. The State was spying upon its citizens, keeping a divine eye on them, taking over the function of the Church. It was the new religion. Man used to be a slave to the Church, but was now a slave of the State. Before it was the Church, and now it was the State that controlled his education; and neither was concerned with the liberation of man.

What is the relationship of the individual to society? Obviously, society exists for the individual, and not the other way round. Society exists for the fruition of man; it exists to give freedom to the individual so that he may have the opportunity to awaken the highest intelligence. This intelligence is not the mere cultivation of a technique or of knowledge; it is to be in touch with that creative reality which is not of the superficial mind. Intelligence is not a cumulative result, but freedom from progressive achievement and success. Intelligence is never static; it cannot be copied and standardized, and hence cannot be taught. Intelligence is to be discovered in freedom.

The collective will and its action, which is society, does not offer this freedom to the individual; for society, not being organic, is ever static. Society is made up, put together, for the convenience of man; it has no independent mechanism of its own. Men may capture society, guide it, shape it, tyrannize over it, depending upon their psychological states; but society is not the master of man. It may influence him, but man always breaks it down. There is conflict between man and society because man is in conflict within himself; and the conflict is between that which is static and that which is living. Society is the outward expression of man. The conflict between himself and society is the conflict within himself. This conflict, within and without, will ever exist until the highest intelligence is awakened.

We are social entities as well as individuals; we are citizens as well as men, separate "becomers" in sorrow and pleasure. If there is to be peace, we have to understand the right relationship between the man and the citizen. Of course, the State would prefer us to be entirely citizens, but that is the stupidity of governments. We ourselves would like to hand over the man to the citizen, for to be a citizen is easier than to be a man. To be a good citizen is to function efficiently within the pattern of a given society. Efficiency and conformity are

demanded of the citizen, as they toughen him, make him ruthless; and then he is capable of sacrificing the man to the citizen. A good citizen is not necessarily a good man; but a good man is bound to be a right citizen, not of any particular society or country. Because he is primarily a good man, his actions will not be anti-social, he will not be against another man. He will live in co-operation with other good men; he will not seek authority, for he has no authority; he will be capable of efficiency without its ruthlessness. The citizen attempts to sacrifice the man, but the man who is searching out the highest intelligence will naturally shun the stupidities of the citizen. So the State will be against the good man, the man of intelligence, but such a man is free from all governments and countries.

The intelligent man will bring about a good society, but a good citizen will not give birth to a society in which man can be of the highest intelligence. The conflict between the citizen and the man is inevitable if the citizen predominates, and any society which deliberately disregards the man is doomed. There is reconciliation between the citizen and the man only when the psychological process of man is understood. The State, the present society, is not concerned with the inner man, but only with the outer man, the citizen. It may deny the inner man, but he always overcomes the outer, destroying the plans cunningly devised for the citizen. The State sacrifices the present for the future, ever safeguarding itself for the future; it regards the future as all-important, and not the present. But, to the intelligent man, the present is of the highest importance, the now and not the tomorrow. *What is* can be understood only with the fading of tomorrow. The understanding of *what is* brings about transformation in the immediate present. It is this transformation that is of supreme importance, and not how to reconcile the citizen with the man. When this transformation takes place, the conflict between the man and the citizen ceases.

Commentaries on Living, Series I, pp. 50-52

Why is society crumbling, collapsing, as it surely is? One of the fundamental reasons is that the individual, you, has ceased to be creative.

I think most of us realize the urgency of an inward revolution, which alone can bring about a radical transformation of the outer, of society. This is the problem with which I myself and all seriously-intentioned people are occupied. How to bring about a fundamental, a radical transformation in society, is our problem; and this transformation of the outer cannot take place without inner revolution. Since society is always static, any action, any reform which is accomplished without this inward revolution becomes equally static; so there is no hope without this constant inward revolution because, without it, outer action becomes repetitive, habitual. The action of relationship between you and another, between you and me, is society; and that society becomes static, it has no life-giving quality, so long as there is not this constant inward revolution, a creative, psychological transformation; and it is because there is not this constant inward revolution that society is always becoming static, crystallized, and has therefore constantly to be broken up.

What is the relationship between yourself and the misery, the confusion in and around you? Surely this confusion, this misery, did not come into being by itself. You and I have created it, not a capitalist nor a communist nor a fascist society, but you and I have created it in our relationship with each other. What you are within has been projected without, on to the world; what you are, what you think and what you feel, what you do in your everyday existence, is projected outwardly, and that constitutes the world. If we are miserable, confused, chaotic within, by projection that becomes the world, that becomes society, because the relationship between yourself and myself, between myself and another *is* society—society is the product of our relationship—and if our relationship is confused,

egocentric, narrow, limited, national, we project that and bring chaos into the world.

What you are, the world is. So, your problem is the world's problem. Surely, this is a simple and basic fact, is it not? In our relationship with the one or the many we seem somehow to overlook this point all the time. We want to bring about alteration through a system or through a revolution in ideas or values based on a system, forgetting that it is you and I who create society, who bring about confusion or order by the way in which we live. So we must begin near, that is, we must concern ourselves with our daily existence, with our daily thoughts and feelings and actions which are revealed in the manner of earning our livelihood and in our relationship with ideas or beliefs. This is our daily existence, is it not? We are concerned with livelihood, getting jobs, earning money; we are concerned with the relationship with our family or with our neighbors, and we are concerned with ideas and with beliefs. Now, if you examine our occupation, it is fundamentally based on envy, it is not just a means of earning a livelihood. Society is so constructed that it is a process of constant conflict, constant becoming; it is based on greed, on envy, envy of your superior: the clerk wanting to become the manager, which shows that he is not just concerned with earning a livelihood, a means of subsistence, but with acquiring position and prestige. This attitude naturally creates havoc in society, in relationship, but if you and I were only concerned with livelihood we should find out the right means of earning it, a means not based on envy. Envy is one of the most destructive factors in relationship because envy indicates the desire for power, for position, and it ultimately leads to politics: both are closely related. . . .

What is our relationship based on? The relationship between yourself and myself, between yourself and another—which is society—what is it based on? Surely not on love, though we talk about it. It is not based on love, because if there

were love there would be order, there would be peace, happiness between you and me. But in that relationship between you and me there is a great deal of ill-will which assumes the form of respect. If we were both equal in thought, in feeling, there would be no respect, there would be no ill-will, because we would be two individuals meeting, not as disciple and teacher, nor as the husband dominating the wife, nor as the wife dominating the husband. When there is ill-will there is a desire to dominate which arouses jealousy, anger, passion, all of which in our relationship creates constant conflict from which we try to escape, and this produces further chaos, further misery.

Now, as regards ideas which are part of our daily existence, beliefs and formulations, are they not distorting our minds? For, what is stupidity? Stupidity is the giving of wrong values to those things which the mind creates, or to those things which the hands produce. Most of our thoughts spring from the self-protective instinct, do they not? Our ideas, oh, so many of them, do they not receive the wrong significance, one which they have not in themselves? Therefore, when we believe in any form—whether religious, economic, or social—when we believe in God, in ideas, in a social system which separates man from man, in nationalism and so on, surely we are giving a wrong significance to belief, which indicates stupidity, for belief divides people, doesn't unite people. So we see that by the way we live we can produce order or chaos, peace or conflict, happiness or misery.

So our problem, is it not, is whether there can be a society which is static and, at the same time, an individual in whom this constant revolution is taking place. That is, revolution in society must begin with the inner, psychological transformation of the individual. Most of us want to see a radical transformation in the social structure. That is the whole battle that is going on in the world—to bring about a social revolu-

tion through communistic or any other means. Now, if there is a social revolution, that is an action with regard to the outer structure of man. However radical that social revolution may be, its very nature is static if there is no inward revolution of the individual, no psychological transformation. Therefore, to bring about a society that is not repetitive, nor static, not disintegrating, a society that is constantly alive, it is imperative that there should be a revolution in the psychological structure of the individual, for without inward, psychological revolution, mere transformation of the outer has very little significance. That is, society is always becoming crystallized, static, and is therefore always disintegrating. However much and however wisely legislation may be promulgated, society is always in the process of decay because revolution must take place within, not merely outwardly.

. . . We see how the structure of the present society in India, in Europe, in America, in every part of the world, is rapidly disintegrating; and we know it within our own lives. We can observe it as we go down the streets. We do not need great historians to tell us the fact that our society is crumbling; and there must be new architects, new builders, to create a new society. The structure must be built on a new foundation, on newly discovered facts and values. Such architects do not yet exist. There are no builders, none who, observing, becoming aware of the fact that the structure is collapsing, are transforming themselves into architects. That is our problem. We see society crumbling, disintegrating; and it is we, you and I, who have to be the architects. You and I have to rediscover the values and build on a more fundamental, lasting foundation; because, if we look to the professional architects, the political and religious builders, we shall be precisely in the same position as before. . . .

Why is society crumbling, collapsing, as it surely is? One of the fundamental reasons is that the individual, you, has ceased

to be creative. I will explain what I mean. You and I have become imitative, we are copying, outwardly and inwardly. Outwardly, when learning a technique, when communicating with each other on the verbal level, naturally there must be some imitation, copy. I copy words. To become an engineer, I must first learn the technique, then use the technique to build a bridge. There must be a certain amount of imitation, copying, in outward technique, but when there is inward, psychological imitation surely we cease to be creative. Our education, our social structure, our so-called religious life, are all based on imitation, that is, I fit into a particular social or religious formula. I have ceased to be a real individual; psychologically, I have become a mere repetitive machine with certain conditioned responses, whether those of the Hindu, the Christian, the Buddhist, the German, or the Englishman. Our responses are conditioned according to the pattern of society, whether it is eastern or western, religious or materialistic. So, one of the fundamental causes of the disintegration of society is imitation, and one of the disintegrating factors is the leader, whose very essence is imitation.

In order to understand the nature of disintegrating society, is it not important to inquire whether you and I, the individual, can be creative? We can see that when there is imitation there must be disintegration; when there is authority there must be copying. And, since our whole mental, psychological make-up is based on authority, there must be freedom from authority to be creative. Have you not noticed that in moments of creativeness, those rather happy moments of vital interest, there is no sense of repetition, no sense of copying? Such moments are always new, fresh, creative, happy. So, we see that one of the fundamental causes of the disintegration of society is copying, which is the worship of authority.

The First and Last Freedom, pp. 35-41

The individual's responsibility is not to society, but to himself. And if he is responsible to himself, he will act upon society.

. . . without a radical transformation of the individual, society becomes a burden, an irresponsible continuity in which the individual is merely a cog.

There is a strong tendency to think that the individual is of little importance in modern society, and that everything possible must be done to control the individual, to shape his thought—through propaganda, through sanctions, through the various means of mass communication. The individual himself wonders what he can do in a society which is so burdensome, which bears down on him with the weight of a mountain, and he feels almost helpless. Confronted with this mass of confusion, deterioration, war, starvation, and misery, the individual not unnaturally puts to himself the question, "What can I do?" And I think the answer to this question is that he cannot do anything, which is an obvious fact. He can't prevent a war, he can't do away with starvation, he can't put a stop to religious bigotry, or to the historical process of nationalism, with all its conflicts.

So, I think to put such a question is inherently wrong. The individual's responsibility is not to society, but to himself. And if he is responsible to himself, he will act upon society—but not the other way round. Obviously, the individual can't do anything about this social confusion, but when he begins to clear up his own confusion, his self-contradiction, his own violence and fears, then such an individual has an extraordinary importance in society. I think very few of us realize this. Seeing that we cannot do anything on a world scale, we invariably do nothing at all, which is really an escape from the action within oneself which will bring about a radical change.

So, I am talking to you as one individual to another. We are not communicating with each other as Indians or Ameri-

cans or Russians or Chinese, nor as members of any particular group. We are talking things over as two human beings, not as a layman and a specialist. If that much is clear between us, we can proceed.

The individual is obviously of the greatest significance in society because it is only the individual who is capable of creative activity, not the mass—and I shall explain presently what I mean by that word *creative*. If you see this fact, then you will also realize that what you are in yourself is of the highest importance. Your capacity to think, to function with wholeness, with an integration in which there is no self-contradiction—this has an enormous significance.

We see that if there is to be any real change in the world—and there *must* be a real change—then you and I as individuals will have to transform ourselves. Unless there is a radical change in each one of us, life becomes an endless imitation, ultimately leading to boredom, frustration, and hopelessness.

New Delhi, 4th Public Talk, February 18, 1959
Collected Works, Vol. XI, pp. 171-2

III. The Importance of the Individual

There is hope in the individual, in you, not in a system, not in the blueprint of a planned society, not in any religious organization, but in you, the individual.

Madras, 3rd Public Talk, November 2, 1947
Collected Works, Vol. IV, p. 92

Anything really true must be totally individual—not in the sense of self-centeredness . . . but individual in the sense that each one of us must experience for himself, uninfluenced, something which is not the outcome of any self-centered interest or drive.

I do not think that we realize the significance or the importance of the individual. Because, as I was saying the other day, to bring about a fundamental, religious revolution, one must surely cease to think in terms of the universal, in terms of the collective. Anything that is made universal, collective, belonging to everybody, can never be true—true in the sense of being directly experienced by each individual, uninfluenced, without the impetus of self-centered interest. I think we do not sufficiently realize the seriousness of this. Anything really true must be totally individual—not in the sense of self-centeredness, which is very limiting and which in itself is evil, but individual in the sense that each one of us must experience

for himself, uninfluenced, something which is not the outcome of any self-centered interest or drive.

One can see in the modern world how everything is tending towards collective thought: everybody thinking alike. The various governments, though they do not compel it, are quietly and sedulously working at it. Organized religions are obviously controlling and shaping the minds of people according to their respective patterns, hoping thereby to bring about a universal morality, a universal experience. But I think that whatever is made universal, in that sense, is always suspect, because it can never be true; it has lost its vitality, its directness, its truth. Yet, throughout the world, we see this tendency to shape and to control the mind of man. And it is extraordinarily difficult to free the mind from this false universality and to change oneself without any self-interest.

Hamburg, Germany, 3rd Public Talk, September 9, 1956
Collected Works, Vol. X, pp. 79-80

What the individual is, the society is.

What the individual is, the society is. What you are matters infinitely. That is not a mere slogan but, if you go into it really deeply, you will discover how significant your actions are, how what you are affects the world in which you live—which is the world of your relationships, however small, however limited. And, if we can fundamentally alter, bring about a radical revolution in ourselves, inwardly, then there is a possibility of creating a different world, a different set of values.

London, 6th Public Talk, April 24, 1952
Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 362

In any creative action it is the individual who matters.

I am talking to the individual because only the individual can change, not the mass; only you can transform yourself, and so the individual matters infinitely. I know it is the fashion to talk about groups, the mass, the race, as though the individual had no importance at all, but in any creative action it is the individual who matters. Any true action, any important decision, the search for freedom, the inquiry after truth, can only come from the individual who understands. . . . If any one of us is truly individual in the sense that he is trying to understand the whole process of his mind, then he will be a creative entity, a free person, unconditioned, capable of pursuing truth for itself and not for a result.

Poona, 2nd Public Talk, September 10, 1958
Collected Works, Vol. XI, p. 21

As long as the individual, which is you and I, does not take responsibility for the complete transformation of society, society will remain as it is.

. . . the collective is composed of individuals, and it is only the response of the individual, of you and me, that can bring about a fundamental alteration in the world; but, when the individual does not see his responsibility, he throws the responsibility onto the collective, and the collective is then used by the clever politician, or by the clever religious leader. Whereas, if you see that you and I are responsible for the alteration of the conditions in the world, then the individual becomes extraordinarily important, and not merely an instrument, a tool, in the hands of another.

. . . Though society may be an entity apart from you, you have created it, and therefore you alone can change it. But, instead of realizing our responsibility as individuals in the col-

lective, we as individuals become cynical, intellectual, or mystical; we avoid our responsibility towards definite action, which must be revolutionary in the fundamental sense; and, as long as the individual, which is you and I, does not take responsibility for the complete transformation of society, society will remain as it is.

Bombay, 6th Public Talk, March 14, 1950
Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 136

IV. The Bondage of Conditioning

You have to find out for yourself, and not wait for me to tell you, whether the mind can ever be free. Can the mind only *think* about freedom, as a prisoner does, and so is doomed never to be free but always to be held within the bondage of its conditioning?

Madras, 1st Public Talk, December 12, 1956
Collected Works, Vol. X, p. 166

Introduction

It seems to me that the whole world is intent on capturing the mind of man. We have created the psychological world of relationship, the world in which we live, and it in turn is controlling us, shaping our thinking, our activities, our psychological being. Every political and religious organization, you will find, is after the mind of man—*after* in the sense of wanting to capture it, shape it to a certain pattern. The powers-that-be in the communist world are blatantly conditioning the mind of man in every direction, and this is also true of the organized religions throughout the world, who for centuries have tried to mold the way of man's thought. Each specialized group, whether religious, secular, or political, is striving to draw

and to hold man within the pattern of that which its books, its leaders, the few in power think is good for him. They think they know the future; they think they know what is the ultimate good for man. The priests, with their so-called religious authority, as well as the worldly powers—whether it be in Rome, in Moscow, in America, or elsewhere—are all trying to control man's thought process, are they not? And most of us eagerly accept some form of authority and subject ourselves to it. There are very few who escape the clutches of this organized control of man and his thinking.

Merely to break away from a particular religious pattern or from a political pattern of the left or of the right, in order to adopt another pattern or to establish one of our own, will not, it seems to me, simplify the extraordinary complexity of our lives or resolve the catastrophic misery in which most of us live. I think the fundamental solution lies elsewhere, and it is this fundamental solution that we are all trying to find. Groping blindly, we join this organization or that. We belong to a particular society, follow this or that leader, try to find a Master in India or somewhere else—always hoping to break away from our narrow, limited existence, but always caught, it seems to me, in this conflict within the pattern. We never seem to get away from the pattern, either self-created or imposed by some leader or religious authority. We blindly accept authority in the hope of breaking through the cloud of our own strife, misery, and struggle, but no leader, no authority is ever going to free man. I think history has shown this very clearly, and you in this country know it very well—perhaps better than others.

So, if a new world is to come into being, as it must, it seems to me extremely important to understand this whole process of authority: the authority imposed by society, by the book, by a set of people who think they know the ultimate good for man and who seek to force him through torture, through every form of compulsion, to conform to their pattern. We are quick

to follow such people because in our own being we are so uncertain, so confused, and we also follow because of our vanity and arrogance and out of desire for the power offered by another.

Now, is it possible to break away from this whole pattern of authority? Can we break away from all authority of any kind in ourselves? We may reject the authority of another, but unfortunately we still have the authority of our own experience, of our own knowledge, of our own thinking, and that in turn becomes the pattern which guides us; but that is essentially no different from the authority of another. There is this desire to follow, to imitate, to conform, in the hope of achieving something greater, and so long as this desire exists, there must be misery and strife, every form of suppression, frustration, and suffering.

I do not think we sufficiently realize the necessity of being free of this compulsion to follow authority, inward or outward. And I think it is very important, psychologically, to understand this compulsion; otherwise, we shall go on blindly struggling in this world in which we live and have our being, and we shall never find that other thing which is so infinitely greater. We must surely break away from this world of imitation and conformity if we are to find a totally different world. This means a really fundamental change in our lives—in the way of our action, in the way of our thought, in the way of our feeling.

But most of us are not concerned with that; we are not concerned with understanding our thoughts, our feelings, our activities. We are only concerned with what to believe or not to believe, with whom to follow or not to follow, with which is the religious society or political party, and all the rest of that nonsense. We are never concerned deeply, inwardly, with a radical change in the way of our daily life, in the way of our speech, the sensitivity of our thought towards another—we are

not concerned with any of that. We cultivate the intellect and acquire knowledge of innumerable things, but we remain inwardly the same: ambitious, cruel, violent, envious, burdened with all the pettiness of which the mind is capable. And, seeing all this, is it possible to break away from the petty mind? I think that is the only real problem. . . .

Hamburg, Germany, 6th Public Talk, September 16, 1956
Collected Works, Vol. X, pp. 98-100

What is Conditioning?

I mean by that word *conditioning* all the impositions which society has laid upon us through propaganda, through insistence, through belief, through fear of heaven and hell. It includes the conditioning of nationality, of climate, of custom, of tradition, of culture—as French, Hindu, or Russian—and the innumerable beliefs, superstitions,. experiences, which form the whole background in which consciousness lives and which is established through one's own desire to remain secure.

Paris, 8th Public Talk, September 21, 1961
Collected Works, Vol. XII, pp. 263-4

The mind is the result of conditioning.

Now, our conditioning is the mind. The mind is the seat of all our conditioning—conditioning being knowledge, experience, belief, tradition, identification with a particular party, with a particular group or nation. The mind is the result of conditioning, the mind is the conditioned state; therefore, any problems that the mind tackles must further increase those problems. As long as the mind deals with any problem, at

any level, it can only create more trouble, more misery, and more confusion.

Paris, 1st Public Talk, April 9, 1950
Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 145

Surely, we are aware, not of our conditioning, but only of conflict, of pain and pleasure.

KRISHNAMURTI: He was very concerned with helping humanity, with doing good works, and was active in various social-welfare organizations. He said he had literally never taken a long holiday, and that since his graduation from college he had worked constantly for the betterment of man. Of course, he wasn't taking any money for the work he was doing. His work had always been very important to him, and he was greatly attached to what he did. He had become a first-class social worker, and he loved it. But he had heard something in one of the talks about the various kinds of escape which condition the mind, and he wanted to talk things over.

Questioner: Do you think being a social worker is conditioning? Does it only bring about further conflict?

KRISHNAMURTI: Let us find out what we mean by conditioning. When are we aware that we are conditioned? Are we ever aware of it? Are you aware that you are conditioned, or are you only aware of conflict, of struggle, at various levels of your being? Surely, we are aware, not of our conditioning, but only of conflict, of pain and pleasure.

Questioner: What do you mean by conflict?

KRISHNAMURTI: Every kind of conflict: the conflict between nations, between various social groups, between individuals,

and the conflict within oneself. Is not conflict inevitable as long as there is no integration between the actor and his action, between challenge and response? Conflict is our problem, is it not? Not any one particular conflict, but all conflict: the struggle between ideas, beliefs, ideologies, between the opposites. If there were no conflict there would be no problems.

Questioner: Are you suggesting that we should all seek a life of isolation, of contemplation?

KRISHNAMURTI: Contemplation is arduous, it is one of the most difficult things to understand. Isolation, though each one is consciously or unconsciously seeking it in his own way, does not solve our problems; on the contrary, it increases them. We are trying to understand what are the factors of conditioning, which bring further conflict. We are only aware of conflict, of pain and pleasure, and we are not aware of our conditioning. What makes for conditioning?

Questioner: Social or environmental influences: the society in which we were born, the culture in which we have been raised, economic and political pressures, and so on.

KRISHNAMURTI: That is so, but is that all? These influences are our own product, are they not? Society is the outcome of man's relationship with man, which is fairly obvious. This relationship is one of use, of need, of comfort, of gratification, and it creates influences, values, that bind us. The binding is our conditioning. By our own thoughts and actions we are bound; but we are not aware that we are bound, we are only aware of the conflict of pleasure and pain. We never seem to go beyond this; and, if we do, it is only into further conflict. We are not aware of our conditioning and, until we are, we can only produce further conflict and confusion.

. . . Just try to be aware of your conditioning. You can only know it indirectly, in relation to something else. You cannot be aware of your conditioning as an abstraction, for then it is merely verbal, without much significance. We are only aware of conflict.

Commentaries On Living, Series II, pp. 3-5

Factors of Conditioning: Organized Religion, Nationalism, Governments

Religion, as it is, is essentially based on ideas, on faith, on authority. . . . But most of us are caught in it and we cannot get out. To get out, to break through our conditioning, requires a great deal of energy.

Religion, as it is, is essentially based on ideas, on faith, on authority. A man who goes every day to the temple, who reads the Gita, the Bible, or the Namaz, who performs certain ceremonies, who everlastingly repeats certain words, the names of Krishna, Rama, this one or that, who wears the so-called sacred thread and aspires to go on some pilgrimage—him you consider a religious man. But, surely, that is not religion. It is an ugly, dreadful, stupid thing. But most of us are caught in it and we cannot get out. To get out, to break through our conditioning, requires a great deal of energy, which we do not have because our energy goes into earning a livelihood and resisting any form of change. To change demands going against society, does it not? And, if in a Hindu society you were not a Hindu, or if you were not a Brahmin in a Brahmin society, or a Christian in a Protestant or Catholic society, you might find it difficult to get a job.

So, one of our difficulties is that to bring about a revolution in oneself requires tremendous energy, which very few of us have because energy, in this sense, implies perception. To see anything very clearly, you must give to it your whole attention, and you cannot give your whole attention if there is any shadow of fear—economic fear or social fear, which is fear of public opinion. Being in a state of fear, we think of reality or God as something far away, unearthly, something which we have to struggle after, grope for—you know, all the tricks we use to escape from the conflict of our daily life to something which we call peace, goodness, God. That is our actual state, is it not?

We see, then, that organized religion, with its superstitions, beliefs, and dogmas is not religion at all, and never has been. We have merely been educated, conditioned from childhood to accept these things as religion, so organized religion is actually a detriment to the discovery of what is the true religious life.

New Delhi, 6th Public Talk, March 2, 1960
Collected Works, Vol. XI, p. 360

The mind must be free from belief and nonbelief.

Belief is not reality. You may believe in God, but your belief has no more reality than that of the man who does not believe in God. Your belief is the result of your background, of your religion, of your fears, and the nonbelief of the communist and others is equally the result of their conditioning. To find out what is true, the mind must be free from belief and nonbelief. I know you smile and agree, but you will still go on believing because it is so much more convenient, so much more respectable and safe. If you did not believe, you might lose your job, you might suddenly find that you are nobody. It is

being free of belief that matters, not your smiling and agreeing in this room.

Varanasi, 5th Public Talk, February 6, 1955
Collected Works, Vol. VIII, p. 294

So, the individual is destroyed through compulsion, through propaganda, and is controlled, dominated, for the sake of the society, for the sake of the state and so on.

Organized religion, organized belief, and totalitarian states are very similar because they all want to destroy the individual through compulsion, through propaganda, through various forms of coercion. The organized religion does the same thing, only in a different way. There, you must accept, you must believe, you are conditioned. The whole tendency both of the left and of the so-called spiritual organizations is to mold the mind to a particular pattern of conduct because the individual left to himself becomes a rebel. So, the individual is destroyed through compulsion, through propaganda, and is controlled, dominated, for the sake of the society, for the sake of the state and so on. The so-called religious organizations do the same, only a little more suspiciously, a little more subtly, because, there too, people must believe, must repress, must control, and all the rest of it. The whole process is to dominate the self in one form or another. Through compulsion, collective action is sought. That is what most organizations want, whether they be economic organizations or religious. They want collective action, which means that the individual should be destroyed. Ultimately, it can only mean that. You accept the Left, the Marxist theory or the Hindu, Buddhist or the Christian doctrines, and thereby you hope to bring about collective action.

Madras, 6th Public Talk, January 20, 1952
Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 279

We are bound by beliefs, by dogmas, for which we are willing to die and destroy each other.

Obviously, what causes war is the desire for power, position, prestige, money, and also the disease called nationalism, the worship of a flag, and the disease of organized religion, the worship of a dogma. All these are the causes of war and, if you as an individual belong to any of the organized religions, if you are greedy for power, if you are envious, you are bound to produce a society which will result in destruction. So again, it depends upon you and not on the leaders, not on Stalin, Churchill, and all the rest of them. It depends upon you and me, but we do not seem to realize that. If once we really felt the responsibility of our own actions, how quickly we could bring to an end all these wars, this appalling misery! But, you see, we are indifferent. We have three meals a day, we have our jobs, we have our bank accounts, big or little, and we say, "For God's sake, don't disturb us, leave us alone." The higher up we are, the more we want security, permanency, tranquillity, the more we want to be left alone, to maintain things fixed as they are; but they cannot be maintained as they are because there is nothing to maintain. Everything is disintegrating. We do not want to face these things; we do not want to face the fact that you and I are responsible for wars. You and I may talk about peace, have conferences, sit around a table and discuss, but inwardly, psychologically, we want power, position, we are motivated by greed. We intrigue, we are nationalistic, we are bound by beliefs, by dogmas, for which we are willing to die and destroy each other. Do you think such men, you and I, can have peace in the world? To have peace, we must be peaceful; to live peacefully means not to create antagonism. Peace is not a ideal. To me, an ideal is merely an escape, an avoidance. . . . But, to have peace, we will have to love, we will have

to begin, not to live an ideal life, but to see things as they are and act upon them, transform them. As long as each one of us is seeking psychological security, the physiological security we need—food, clothing, and shelter—is destroyed. We are seeking psychological security, which does not exist; and we seek it, if we can, through power, through position, through titles, names—all of which is destroying physical security. This is an obvious fact, if you look at it.

Bangalore, 2nd Public Talk, July 11, 1948
Collected Works, Vol. V, p. 15

V. Problems of Unconditioning

Man, the human being, has done everything to bring about a radical change; and yet, fundamentally, man has not changed at all. We are what we have been for two million years!

So, our question is: How can a brain as well as the mind, that is, the total human being—physiologically, neurologically—completely change? How can the human being completely change? Such a change is necessary—one sees that. And, unless there is a change, there will always be war—one nation against another, one nationality against another, all that terrible brutality of war, your country against another country, the linguistic differences, the economic differences, the social differences, the moral differences and the everlasting battle, outward and inward—there must be change. Now, how is one to bring it about?

Please see the extraordinary complexity of this question, what is involved in it. Man has tried so many ways—gone away to the monasteries, renounced the world and taken *sannyas,* gone into the woods and meditated, fasted, become a celibate, has done everything that he could possibly imagine, has mesmerized himself, has forced himself, has examined, analyzed his consciousness, the conscious and the unconscious—he has done everything to bring about a radical revolution within himself. And he has been ruthless therefore in himself, not only as an individual, but as a human being—the two are entirely dif-

ferent. The individual is a local entity: a Parsi, a Buddhist, a Muslim, and so on. The individual is conditioned by the environment. But the human being is beyond that; he is concerned with the total man—not about his country, the linguistic differences, his little wars and quarrels, his petty little gods, and so on—he is concerned with the whole state of man, his conflict, his despair. When you see the whole, then you can understand the particular; but the particular cannot possibly understand the whole. So, for the constantly introspective individual, inquiry has no meaning at all because he is still concerned with the pattern of his own existence, conditioned by society—in which is included religion and all the rest of it. Whereas man—as a human being who has lived for two million years—has suffered, has thought, has inquired . . . whether in Russia, in China, in America, or here.

And man, the human being, has done everything to bring about a radical change; and yet, fundamentally, man has not changed at all. We are what we have been for two million years! The animal is very strong in us. The animal with all its greed, envy, ambition, anger, ruthlessness still exists deep down in our hearts and minds. And we have, through religion, through culture, through civilization, polished the outer; we have better manners—perhaps a few of us have better manners. We know a little more. Technologically, we have gone very far. We can discuss Western and Eastern philosophy, literature; we can travel all over the world. But inwardly, deep down, the roots are very firmly embedded.

Seeing all this, how is one—you as a human being and I as a human being—how are we to change? Certainly not through tears, certainly not through intellection, not through following an ideological utopia, not through external tyranny, nor through self-imposed tyranny. So, one discards all this, and I hope you have also discarded all this. Do you under-

stand? To discard one's nationality; to discard one's gods, one's own tradition, one's beliefs; to discard all the things that we have been brought up to believe in—to discard all this is a very difficult thing to do. We may intellectually agree, but deep down in the unconscious there is the insistence on the importance of the past, to which we cling.

Now you know the problem. . . .

Bombay, 2nd Public Talk, February 16, 1966
Collected Works, Vol. XVI, pp. 48-9

Thought, which is the product of yesterday, can only respond in terms of yesterday, of time.

So, the problem is this: Thought is conditioned, fixed in a pattern. Thought responds to challenge, which is ever new, according to the past, thus modifying the new. Thought, which is the product of yesterday, can only respond in terms of yesterday, of time. When you ask, "How can I break away from the tyranny of conditioning?" you are asking a wrong question. Thought can never be free. Thought only knows continuity, not freedom. Freedom is when thought is not. There is freedom only when the process of continuity ceases. Thought gives continuity. So thought must be aware of its own conditioning and not try to become something. The becoming gives continuity to thought and thus there is no freedom from conditioning. Thought must cease for freedom to be. When thought is active, positively or negatively, then it is conditioning, giving birth to modified continuity.

Bombay, 1st Public Talk, January 18, 1948
Collected Works, Vol. IV, pp. 161-2

The difficulty, it seems to me, lies in understanding the fact that any form of change in a conditioned mind gives only a different conditioning, not a transformation.

One can see that any conscious change is no change at all. The deliberate process of bringing about self-improvement, the deliberate cultivation of a particular pattern or form of action, does not bring about a real change at all, for it is merely a projection of one's own desire, of one's own background, as a reaction. Yet, we are most of us concerned over this question of change because we are groping, we are confused. And those of us who are at all given to seriousness must vitally inquire into this question of how to bring about a change in ourselves. The difficulty, it seems to me, lies in understanding the fact that any form of change in a conditioned mind gives only a different conditioning, not a transformation. If I, as a Hindu or a Christian or what you will, try to change within that pattern, it is no real change at all; it is only perhaps a seemingly better, more convenient, more adaptive conditioning, but fundamentally it is not a change. I think one of the greatest difficulties we are confronted with is that we think we can change within the pattern; whereas, surely, for a mind which is conditioned by society, by any form of culture, to bring about a conscious change within the pattern is still a process of conditioning. If that is very clear, then I think our inquiry to find out what transformation is, how it is possible to bring about a radical change in ourselves, becomes very interesting, a vital issue. . . .

London, 4th Public Talk, June 24, 1955
Collected Works, Vol. IX, pp. 54-5

When a conditioned mind seeks an answer to a problem, it is going around in circles; its search has no meaning.

So, the question is how to tackle, how to approach the problem. If you approach any problem with the intention of finding an answer, then the answer will create more problems—which is so obvious. What is important is to go into the problem and begin to understand it; and you can do that only when you don't condemn, resist, or push it away. The mind cannot solve a problem as long as it is condemning, justifying, or comparing. The difficulty is not in the problem, but in the mind that approaches the problem with an attitude of condemnation, justification, or comparison. So, first, you have to understand how your mind is conditioned by society, by the innumerable influences that exist about you. You call yourself a Hindu, a Christian, a Muslim, or what you will, which means that your mind is conditioned; and it is the conditioned mind that creates the problem. When a conditioned mind seeks an answer to a problem, it is going around in circles; its search has no meaning. And your mind is conditioned because you are envious, because you compare, judge, evaluate, because you are tethered to beliefs, dogmas. That conditioning is what creates the problem.

Bombay, 3rd Public Talk, March 11, 1956
Collected Works, Vol. IX, p. 253

Freedom from conditioning comes into being only when we see the necessity of a mind that is unconditioned. But we have never thought about it, we have never inquired . . .

Most of us are concerned, not with unconditioning the mind, but with conditioning it better, making it nobler, making it less this and more that. We have never inquired into the possibility of the mind's unconditioning itself completely. . . .

Freedom from conditioning comes into being only when we see the necessity of a mind that is unconditioned. But we have never thought about it, we have never inquired; we have merely accepted authority, and there are whole groups of people who say that the mind cannot be unconditioned and must therefore be conditioned better.

Now, I am suggesting that the mind *can* be unconditioned. It is not for you to accept what I say because that would be too stupid, but if one is really interested, one can find out for oneself whether it is possible for the mind to be unconditioned. Surely, that possibility exists only if one is aware that one is conditioned and does not accept that conditioning as something noble, a worthwhile part of social culture. The unconditioned mind is the only truly religious mind, and only the religious mind can create a fundamental revolution, which is essential, and which is not an economic revolution, nor the revolution of the communists or the socialists. To find out what is true, the mind must be aware of itself; it must have self-knowledge, which means being alert to all its conscious and unconscious urges and compulsions. But a mind which is the residue of traditions, of values, of so-called culture and education, such a mind is incapable of finding out what is true. It may say it believes in God, but its God has no reality, for it is only the projection of its own conditioning.

Sydney, 1st Public Talk, November 9, 1955
Collected Works, Vol. IX, pp. 137-8

VI. Wrong Approaches to Unconditioning

Desire, Will, Effort, Choice

Effort does not clear up any of our problems.

. . . if we make an effort from the center of the self, it must inevitably produce more conflict, more confusion, more misery. Yet we keep on making effort after effort. And very few of us realize that the self-centered activity of effort does not clear up any of our problems; on the contrary, it increases our confusion and our misery and our sorrow. We know this. And yet we continue, hoping somehow to break through this self-centered activity of effort, the action of the will.

London, 5th Public Talk, April 23, 1952
Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 355

The thinker and his thoughts are the outcome of desire.

Questioner: Can conflict come to an end without the power of will?

KRISHNAMURTI: Without understanding the ways of conflict and how it comes into being, of what value is it merely to suppress or sublimate conflict, or find a substitute for it? You may be able to suppress a disease, but it is bound to show itself again in another form. Will itself is conflict, it is the outcome

of struggle; will is purposive, directed desire. Without comprehending the process of desire, merely to control it is to invite further burning, further pain. Control is evasion. You may control a child or a problem, but you have not thereby understood either. Understanding is of far greater importance than arriving at an end. The action of will is destructive, for action towards an end is self-enclosing, separating, isolating. You cannot silence conflict, desire, for the maker of the effort is himself the product of conflict, of desire. The thinker and his thoughts are the outcome of desire, and without understanding desire, which is the self placed at any level, high or low, the mind is ever caught in ignorance. The way to the supreme does not lie through will, through desire. The supreme can come into being only when the maker of effort is not. It is will that breeds conflict, the desire to become or to make way for the supreme. When the mind which is put together through desire comes to an end—not through effort—then in that stillness, which is not a goal, reality comes into being.

Commentaries on Living, Series I, p. 212

There is peace only when there is no desire to become something.

We all want to become something: a pacifist, a war hero, a millionaire, a virtuous man, or what you will. The very desire to become involves conflict, and that conflict produces war. There is peace only when there is no desire to become something, and that is the only true state because in that state alone there is creation, there is reality. But that is completely foreign to the whole structure of society, which is the projection of yourself. You worship success. Your god is success, the giver of titles, degrees, position, and authority. There is a constant battle within yourself—the struggle to achieve what

you want. You never have a peaceful moment, there is never peace in your heart because you are always striving to become something, to progress. Do not be misled by the word *progress.* Mechanical things progress, but thought can never progress except in terms of its own becoming.

New York, 3rd Public Talk, June 18, 1950
Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 196

It is only a confused mind that chooses.

It is one of the fallacious concepts that man is free. Of course, man is free to choose, but when he chooses he is already in confusion. When you see something very clearly, then you do not choose. Please look at this fact in yourselves. When you see something very clearly, where is the necessity of choice? There is no choice. It is only a confused mind that chooses, that says, "This is right, this is wrong, I must do this because it is right," and so on, not a clear precise mind that sees directly. For such a mind there is no choice. You see, we say that we choose and therefore we are free. That is one of the absurdities we have invented, but we are not basically free at all. We are conditioned, and it requires an enormous understanding of this conditioning to be free.

Varanasi, 2nd Talk to Students, December 14, 1967
Collected Works, Vol. XVII, p. 270

Power and Authority

Freedom is at the beginning as well as at the end, and if you accept an authority at the beginning, you will always be a slave at the end.

New Delhi, 1st Public Talk, November 19, 1967
Collected Works, Vol. XVII, p. 218

The fact is that the human mind is seeking power and, in the search for power, it loses its individuality.

I think one of the fundamental reasons for our having ceased to be individuals is the fact that we are pursuing power; we all want to be somebody, even in the house, in the flat, in the room. Just as nations create the tension of power, so each separate human being is everlastingly seeking to be something in relation to society: he wants to be recognized as a big man, as a capable bureaucrat, as a gifted artist, as a spiritual person, and so on. We all want to be something, and the desire to be something springs from the urge to power. If you examine yourself, you will see that what you want is success and the recognition of your success, not only in this world, but in the next world—if there is a next world. You want to be recognized and, for that recognition, you are dependent on society. Society recognizes only those who have power, position, prestige; and it is the vanity, the arrogance of power, position, prestige that most of us are seeking. Our deep, underlying motive is the pride of achievement, and this pride asserts itself in different ways.

Now, as long as we are seeking power in any direction, real individuality is crushed out—not only our own individuality, but that of others. I think this is a basic psychological

fact in life. When we seek to be somebody, it means that we desire to be recognized by society; therefore, we become slaves to society, mere cogs in the social machine, and hence we cease to be individuals. I think this is a fundamental issue, not to be quickly brushed aside. As long as the mind is seeking any form of power—power through a sect, power through knowledge, power through wealth, power through virtue—it must invariably breed a society which will destroy the individual, because then the human mind is caught and educated in an environment which encourages the psychological dependence on success. Psychological dependence destroys the clear mind which is alone, uncorrupted, and which is the only mind capable of thinking problems right through individually, independent of society and of its own desires.

So, the mind is everlastingly seeking to be something, and thereby increasing its own sense of power, position, prestige. From the urge to be something springs leadership, following, the worship of success; and hence there is no deep individual perception of inward reality. If one actually sees this whole process, then is it possible to cut at the root of one's search for power? Do you understand the meaning of that word *power?* The desire to dominate, to possess, to exploit, to depend on another—all that is implied in this search for power. We can find other and more subtle explanations, but the fact is that the human mind is seeking power and, in the search for power, it loses its individuality.

Bombay, 7th Public Talk, March 25, 1956
Collected Works, Vol. IX, pp. 274-5

To be free of society implies psychological freedom, that is, to be totally free from ambition, from envy, greed, power, position, prestige.

. . . as long as you are acquisitive, envious, ambitious, seeking power, position, prestige, society approves of it; and on that you base your action. That action is considered respectable, moral. But it is not moral at all. Power in any form is evil: the power of the husband over the wife or the wife over the husband, the power of the politicians. The more tyrannical, the more bigoted, the more religious the power, the more evil it is. That is a fact, a provable, observable fact, but society approves of it. You all worship the man in power, and you base your action on that power. So, if you observe that your action is based on acquisitiveness of power, on the desire to succeed, on the desire to be somebody in this rotten world, then facing the fact will bring about a totally different action, and that is true action—not the action which society has imposed upon the individual. So, social morality is not morality at all; it is immoral; it is another form of defending ourselves, and therefore we are being gradually destroyed by society. A man who would understand freedom must be ruthlessly free of society—psychologically, not physically. You cannot be free of society physically because, for everything, you do depend on society—the clothes that you wear, money, and so on. Outwardly, nonpsychologically, you depend on society. But to be free of society implies psychological freedom, that is, to be totally free from ambition, from envy, greed, power, position, prestige.

New Delhi, 8th Public Talk, February 14, 1962
Collected Works, Vol. XIII, p. 110

The authority of one's conditioning . . . leads to every form of illusion.

One must find out for oneself why one follows, why one accepts this tyranny of authority: the authority of the priest, the authority of the printed word, the Bible, the Indian scriptures, and all the rest of it. Can one reject completely the authority of society? I do not mean the rejection brought about by the beatniks of the world; that is merely a reaction. But, can one really see that this outward conformity to a pattern is futile, destructive to the mind that wants to find out what is true, what is real? And, if one rejects the outer authority, is it possible also to reject the inner, the authority of experience? Can one put away experience? For most of us, experience is the guidance of knowledge. We say, "I know from experience" or "Experience tells me I must do this," and experience becomes one's inward authority. And perhaps that is far more destructive, far more evil, than outward authority. It is the authority of one's conditioning and leads to every form of illusion. The Christian sees visions of Christ, and the Hindu sees visions of his own gods, each because of his own conditioning. And the very seeing of those visions, the very experiencing of those illusions, makes him highly respected, and he becomes a saint.

London, 6th Public Talk, May 14, 1961
Collected Works, Vol. XII, p. 144

Reform

Total transformation can never take place within the pattern of any society, whether that society be tyrannical or so-called democratic.

Questioner: . . . I have had the privilege of being closely associated with some of our greatest reformers. I believe that reform, not revolution, is the only way out of this chaos. Look what the Russian Revolution has come to! No, sir, the really great men have always been reformers.

KRISHNAMURTI: What do you mean by *reform?*

Questioner: To reform is gradually to improve the social and economic conditions of the people through the various schemes that we have formulated; it is to lessen poverty, to remove superstition, to get rid of class divisions, and so on.

KRISHNAMURTI: Such reformation is always within the existing social pattern. A different group of people may come out on top, new legislation may be enacted, there may be the nationalization of certain industries, and all the rest of it; but it is always within the present framework of society. That is what's called reform, isn't it?

Questioner: If you object to that, then you can only be advocating revolution. . . .

KRISHNAMURTI: A revolution within the pattern, within the framework of society, is no revolution at all; it may be progressive or retrogressive but, like reform, it is only a modified continuation of what has been. However good and necessary

the reform, it can only bring about a superficial change, which will again require further reform. There is no end to this process, because society is ever disintegrating within the pattern of its own existence.

Questioner: Do you then maintain, sir, that all reform, however beneficial, is just so much patchwork, and that no amount of reform can bring about a total transformation of society?

KRISHNAMURTI: Total transformation can never take place within the pattern of any society, whether that society be tyrannical or so-called democratic.

Questioner: Is not a democratic society more significant and worthwhile than a police or tyrannical state?

KRISHNAMURTI: Of course.

Questioner: Then, what do you mean by the pattern of society?

KRISHNAMURTI: The pattern of society is human relationship based on ambition, envy, on the personal or collective desire for power, on the hierarchical attitude, on ideologies, dogmas, beliefs. Such a society may and generally does profess to believe in love, in goodness; but it is always ready to kill, to go to war. Within the pattern, change is no change at all, however revolutionary it may appear. When the patient needs a major operation, it's foolish merely to alleviate the symptoms.

Questioner: But who's to be the surgeon?

KRISHNAMURTI: You have to operate on yourself, and not rely on another, however good a specialist you may think him to be. You have to step out of the pattern of society, the pattern of greed, of acquisitiveness, of conflict.

Questioner: Will my stepping out of the pattern affect society?

KRISHNAMURTI: First step out of it, and see what happens. To stay within the pattern and ask what will happen if you step out of it is a form of escape, a perverted and useless inquiry.

Commentaries On Living, Series III, pp. 131-2

Analysis

Analysis is not the way to understand the unconscious.

Our conditioning, conscious and unconscious, is very deep and heavy, is it not? We are Christians, Hindus, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, Indians, Russians; we belong to this or that church with all its dogmas, to this or that race with its burden of history. Superficially, our minds are educated. The conscious mind is educated according to the culture we live in and, from that, one can perhaps disentangle oneself fairly easily. It is not too difficult to put aside being an Englishman, an Indian, a Russian, or whatever one happens to be, or to leave a particular church or religion. But it is much more difficult to uncondition the unconscious, which plays a far greater part in our life than the conscious mind. The training of the conscious mind is useful and necessary as a means of earning a livelihood or to perform a certain function, which is what our education is mostly concerned about. We are trained to do

certain things, to function more or less mechanically in a certain way. That is our superficial education. But inwardly, unconsciously, deep down, we are the result of many thousands of years of man's endeavor; we are the sum total of his struggles, his hopes, his despairs, his everlasting search for something beyond, and this piling up of experience is still going on within us. To be aware of that conditioning, and to be free of it, demands a great deal of attention.

It isn't a matter of analysis because you cannot analyze the unconscious. I know there are specialists who attempt to do that, but I don't believe it is possible. The unconscious cannot be approached by the conscious. I will show you why. Through dreams, through hints, through symbols, through various forms of intimation, the unconscious tries to communicate with the conscious mind. These hints and intimations require interpretation, and the conscious mind interprets them according to its conditioning, its peculiar idiosyncrasies. So, there is never complete contact between the two, and never complete understanding of the unconscious. It is something that we don't quite know in its entirety. And yet, without understanding and being free of the unconscious, with its burden of history, the whole long story of the past, there will always be a contradiction, a conflict, a battle raging within.

So, as I said, analysis is not the way to understand the unconscious. Analysis implies an observer, an analyzer apart from the analyzed. There is a division and, where there is a division, there is no understanding.

Now, this is one of our difficulties, perhaps our major difficulty: to be free of the whole content of the unconscious. And, is such a thing possible? I do not know if you have ever tried to analyze yourself—to analyze what you think, what you feel, and also the motives, the intentions behind your thoughts and feelings. If you have, I am sure you will have found that

analysis cannot penetrate very deeply. It goes to a certain depth, and there it stops. To penetrate very deeply, one has to put an end to this process of the analyzer continually analyzing, and begin instead just to listen, to see, to observe every thought and every feeling without saying, "This is right and that is wrong," without condemnation or justification. When you do so observe, you will find there is no contradiction and therefore no effort, and therefore there is immediate understanding.

But, to go very deeply into oneself, one must obviously be free of ambition, of competition, of envy, greed. And that's a very difficult thing to do because envy, greed, and ambition are the very substance of the psychological-social structure of which we are a part. Living as we are in a world made up of acquisitiveness, ambition, competition—to be entirely free of these things and yet not be destroyed by the world is really the problem.

London, 1st Public Talk, June 5, 1962
Collected Works, Vol. XIII, pp. 166-7

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To meet the challenge of the new, the mind must be new.

The understanding of the whole process of conditioning does not come to you through analysis or introspection because, the moment you have the analyzer, that very analyzer himself is part of the background and therefore his analysis is of no significance. That is a fact and you must put it aside. The analyzer who examines, who analyses the thing which he is looking at, is himself part of the conditioned state and therefore, whatever his interpretation, his understanding, his analysis may be, it is still part of the background. So, that way there is no escape, and to break the background is essential because, to meet the challenge of the new, the mind must be new; to discover God, truth, or what you will, the mind must be fresh,

uncontaminated by the past. To analyze the past, to arrive at conclusions through a series of experiments, to make assertions and denials and all the rest of it, implies, in its very essence, the continuance of the background in different forms. When you see the truth of that fact, you will discover that the analyzer has come to an end. Then there is no entity apart from the background: there is only thought as the background, thought being the response of memory, both conscious and unconscious, individual and collective.

The First and Last Freedom, p. 225

Methods, Systems, Patterns

There is no method to uncondition you.

Is a method going to uncondition you? There is no method to uncondition you. We have played with these words, we have done all these things for centuries—the gurus, the monasteries, Zen, this or that method—with the result you are caught, you are a slave to the method, aren't you, and therefore you are not free. The method will produce the result; but the result is the outcome of your confusion, of your conditioning, and therefore it will still be conditioned. . . .

New Delhi, 2nd Public Talk, December 18, 1966
Collected Works, Vol. XVII, p. 107

To see the truth, there must be freedom.

You can see that those who pursue a system, who drive the mind into certain practices, obviously condition the mind according to that formula; therefore, the mind is not free. It is

only the free mind that can discover, not a mind conditioned according to any system, whether Oriental or Occidental. Conditioning is the same, by whatever name you may call it. To see the truth, there must be freedom, and a mind that is conditioned according to a system can never see the truth.

New York, 5th Public Talk, July 2, 1950
Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 211

Self-improvement

Religiously . . . socially and politically, there is the constant urge of self-improvement.

Throughout the world there is immense poverty, as in Asia, and enormous wealth, as in this country; there is cruelty, suffering, injustice, a sense of living in which there is no love. Seeing all this, what is one to do? What is the true approach to these innumerable problems? Religions everywhere have emphasized self-improvement, the cultivation of virtue, the acceptance of authority, the following of certain dogmas, beliefs, the making of great effort to conform. Not only religiously, but also socially and politically, there is the constant urge of self-improvement: I must be more noble, more gentle, more considerate, less violent. Society, with the help of religion, has brought about a culture of self-improvement in the widest sense of that word. That is what each one of us is trying to do all the time; we are trying to improve ourselves, which implies effort, discipline, conformity, competition, acceptance of authority, a sense of security, the justification of ambition. And self-improvement does produce certain obvious results: it makes one more socially inclined. It has social significance and no

more, for self-improvement does not reveal the ultimate reality. I think it is very important to understand this.

The religions that we have do not help us to understand that which is the real because they are essentially based, not on the abandonment of the self, but on the improvement, the refinement of the self, which is the continuity of the self in different forms. It is only the very few who break away from society, not the outward trappings of society, but from all the implications of a society which is based on acquisitiveness, on envy, on comparison, competition. This society conditions the mind to a particular pattern of thought, the pattern of self-improvement, self-adjustment, self-sacrifice, and only those who are capable of breaking away from all conditioning can discover that which is not measurable by the mind. . . .

So, everywhere society is conditioning the individual, and this conditioning takes the form of self-improvement, which is really the perpetuation of the 'me', the ego, in different forms. Self-improvement may be gross or it may be very, very refined when it becomes the practice of virtue, goodness, the so-called love of one's neighbor, but essentially it is the continuance of the 'me', which is a product of the conditioning influences of society. All your endeavor has gone into becoming something—either here, if you can make it, or if not, in another world—but it is the same urge, the same drive to maintain and continue the self.

Ojai, 2nd Public Talk, August 7, 1955
Collected Works, Vol. IX, pp. 83-4

Self-improvement is progress in sorrow, not the cessation of sorrow.

There is progress in self-improvement: I can be better tomorrow, more kind, more generous, less envious, less ambi-

tious. But does self-improvement bring about a complete change in one's thinking? Or, is there no change at all, but only progress? Progress implies time, does it not? I am this today and I shall be something better tomorrow. That is, in self-improvement or self-denial or self-abnegation, there is progression, the gradualism of moving towards a better life, which means superficially adjusting to environment, conforming to an improved pattern, being conditioned in a nobler way, and so on. We see that process taking place all the time. And you must have wondered, as I have, whether progress does bring about a fundamental revolution.

To me, the important thing is not progress but revolution. Please don't be horrified by that word *revolution,* as most people are in a very progressive society like this. But it seems to me that, unless we understand the extraordinary necessity of bringing about not just a social amelioration but a radical change in our outlook, mere progress is progress in sorrow; it may effect the pacification, the calming of sorrow, but not the cessation of sorrow which is always latent. After all, progress in the sense of getting better over a period of time is really the process of the self, the 'me', the ego. There is progress in self-improvement, obviously, which is the determined effort to be good, to be more this or less that, and so on. As there is improvement in refrigerators and airplanes, so also there is improvement in the self, but that improvement, that progress, does not free the mind from sorrow.

. . . self-improvement is progress in sorrow, not the cessation of sorrow.

Ojai, 4th Public Talk, July 14, 1955

You have taken the wrong road. You have walked a long, weary way and you discover that the path or road doesn't lead to where you want to go.

As a means of bringing about a change in ourselves, we have used thought: thought as desire, thought as will, thought pursuing an idea according to which we must conform, thought as time. Thought says, "I am this" or "I have been this and I will be that." Thought itself has become the instrument which hopes to bring about a revolution within, thought being the response of memory, which is the accumulation of centuries of experience of humanity and of the particular individual.

We are that background—it is us—and to any challenge, to any questioning, to anything new, we respond according to that background, according to our conditioning. Can thought as will, as desire, as gaining, as losing bring about a revolution in us? If thought will not, then what will? We know what is meant by thought bringing about a revolution, a change. I say to myself, "I am this," whatever it is—afraid, envious, greedy, pursuing my own personal satisfaction, functioning in a self-centered activity. I see that, and I say to myself, "I must change because it is too painful, it is too silly, it is too immature, there is pain." I exercise will, suppression, control, discipline, which is the functioning of thought, and I see that I don't change at all. I move in another part of the same field. Perhaps I am less irritable, a little more this and a little less that, but thought has not revolutionized my psyche, my whole being. You must have recognized that too. Thought only breeds more conflict, more pain, more pleasure, more struggle. So, what will bring about a change, a revolution within this field?

When you ask that question of yourself, what is the answer? How do you answer it? You have struggled all your life. If you have enough money, you go to an analyst; if you haven't, you go to a priest. Or, if you do neither, you watch yourself,

control yourself, discipline yourself—you will do this, you will do that, ten different things. Yet out of that struggle there is no flowering, there is no beauty, there is no freedom, there is no peace: you end up in a dead end. You all know this if you have gone through this inquiry. Then, what will bring a change? How will you answer that question? It would be very much worthwhile if each one would answer that question for himself, answer it and not wait for someone else to tell him. If you are waiting for someone else to tell you, you are not learning. As I said, we are taking a journey together. There is neither a teacher nor a follower; there is no authority; there is only the privacy, the solitude of your own inquiry and discovery. If you discover for yourself, then out of that discovery a new energy is born, a new resurgence. But, if you are merely waiting for someone to tell you, then you are back again in the old rut that has very little meaning.

How do you answer this question? You are taking a road, going to some place, to your home. You ask someone and he tells you that you have taken the wrong road. You have walked a long, weary way, and you discover that the path or road doesn't lead to where you want to go. You make several inquiries, and you find for yourself that the road doesn't lead anywhere. Then, what do you do? You stop, turn around, and take the other road. But first, you stop; first, you empty your mind, or rather the mind empties itself, of all the patterns, of all the formulas. It empties itself of all the strongholds of memory, and the very emptying of the whole being is the process of revolution. But no one can empty a mind that is committed, that is always occupied, that is never empty. A mind is empty that has listened, watched, observed all its movement, the total movement, which can be done in a flash. When you have observed it and have seen the futility of this everlasting thought as an instrument which can bring about a revolution, then naturally, when you see all that, you turn your back on the

old road. This can only take place when the mind, the whole psyche, is completely empty. That emptiness is maturity, and out of it there is a totally different dimension of activity and living.

Saanen, 5th Public Talk, July 19, 1966
Collected Works, Vol. XVI, pp. 220-1

VII. Can the Mind Ever Free Itself from Conditioning?

Introduction

Though one must distrust similarities, there is not much difference between the Orient and the Occident, the people who live in Asia and those who live in the West. Though they may have different philosophies, different beliefs, different customs, habits, and manners from the West, they are human beings like the rest of the world—suffering, with innumerable problems, anxious, fearful, often in great despair over disease, old age, and death. These problems exist throughout the world. Their beliefs, their gods are not different from the gods and beliefs of this country or of other countries in the West. These beliefs have not solved any human problems fundamentally, deeply, radically. They have brought about a certain culture, good manners, a superficial acceptance of certain relationships, but deeply, radically, man has not changed very much in the last two million years or so. Man throughout these ages, apparently, has struggled, has swum against the current of life, always in battle, in conflict, striving, groping, searching, asking, demanding, praying, looking to someone else to solve his human problems.

This has been going on century upon century, and apparently we have not solved our problems. We still suffer; we

still are groping, searching, asking, demanding that someone tell us what we should do, what we should not do, how we should think and what not to think, exchanging one belief for another, one outlook, one idiotic ideology for another. We all know this; we've all been through the varieties of beliefs. Though we react, change our positions in the same field of life, somehow we remain fundamentally what we are. Perhaps there is a little change here and there; there are little modifications, different sects, different groups and different outlooks, but inwardly there is the same fearful struggle, anxiety, despair.

Perhaps we can approach these problems differently. There must be—and I think there is—a different approach to our whole existence, a different way of living, without this battle, without this fear, without these gods that have really lost their meaning altogether, and without these ideologies, whether communist or religious, which have little meaning anymore. Probably, they never had much meaning; they helped to civilize man, make him a little more gentle, a little more friendly, but basically man has not been tamed or changed fundamentally. We are still brutal, at war with one another, both outwardly and inwardly. There have been fifteen thousand wars in the last five thousand five hundred years—two and a half wars every year. Mankind has been venomous, hating, competing, striving for position, prestige, power, and domination. This we all know, and this we accept as the way of life: war, fear, conflict, a superficial existence. That's what we have accepted.

It seems to me that there may be a different way of living, and this is what we are going to talk about during these five gatherings: how to bring about a revolution, not outwardly but inwardly, because the crisis is in consciousness; it is not economic or social. We are always responding to outward challenge, trying to answer it superficially. We must actually respond adequately to this inward crisis which has been mount-

ing, building up throughout the ages. The intellectual, clever, cunning philosophies, theologies, and the various escapes of religions through dogmas cannot possibly answer these problems. The more one is serious, the more one becomes aware of these problems. I mean by *serious* those who are capable, who are actually facing the issues and resolving them, not postponing, not escaping, not trying to answer them intellectually, verbally, or emotionally. Life is only for the serious, and not for those who merely enjoy themselves, answering superficially, escaping from the deep crisis within. . . .

What we are talking about is the ending of this everlasting conflict. We are trying to find out if it is at all possible, living in this world, to live entirely without conflict. To find out if that is possible, we must give attention. There is no attention if you say, "I agree," or if you say, "So far I go and no further; this pleases me, this doesn't; I am a writer, and I want to interpret all this in a certain way." If we can give attention, it becomes extremely worthwhile if we could so listen; then we establish a communion between us. In that communion there is neither the teacher nor the taught, which again is too immature. There is no follower and no one who says, "Do this; do that." As human beings we have been through all that for centuries upon centuries. We've had saviors, Masters, gods, beliefs, religions by the dozen, and they have not solved our problems. We are as unhappy as ever, miserable, confused, suffering, and our lives have become very petty, small. We may be awfully clever, talk infinitely about everything cleverly, but inwardly there's a turmoil, an endless loneliness, a deepening, wider confusion and a sorrow that seems to have no end at all.

Having stated the problem, with which most of us are quite familiar, is there a different approach? The old approach obviously is not the way out. Of that, one must be absolutely clear so that one turns one's back on it completely. The old way of the religions, with their beliefs, dogmas, saviors, Mas-

ters, priests, archbishops, and all the rest of it—whether it is Catholic, Protestant, Hindu, or Buddhist—all that one must put aside entirely because one understands that such a way doesn't give man any freedom. Freedom is something entirely different from revolt. The whole world at the present time is in revolt, especially the young, but that's not freedom.

Freedom is something entirely different; freedom is not *from* something. If it is from something, it's a revolt. If I revolt against the religion to which I belong, out of that reaction I join another religion because it gives me, I think, greater freedom, something more exciting, a new set of words, a new set of phrases, a new set of dogmas and ideologies, but this reaction is incapable of examining. Only a mind that is in freedom, not in reaction, can examine—not only the human mind as it is but also the whole psychological structure of the social order of which one is a part—questioning, doubting, being skeptical. To question, to ask, to find out—all these demand a great deal of freedom, not a great deal of reaction. Where there is freedom there is passion, there is an intensity which is entirely different from the intensity and the passion of reaction. The passion, the intensity, the vitality, the vigor that freedom brings about cannot end, whereas the enthusiasm, the interest, the vitality of reaction can undergo a change and be modified.

To find out if there is a different way—a different way of living, not a different way of doing or acting, but of living which is acting—one must naturally turn one's back upon those things to which one has become a slave. I think that is the first thing one has to do because, otherwise, one cannot examine, one cannot look. How can a mind that is so heavily conditioned through two thousand years of propaganda or ten thousand years of tradition, how can such a mind observe? It can only observe according to its conditioning, according to its ambitions, according to its craving for fulfillment. Such examination has no vitality, nothing; it cannot discover anything

new. Even in the scientific field, though one may have a great deal of knowledge, to discover anything new the known must be temporarily set aside; otherwise, one can't discover anything new. It is obvious that, if one is to see the new clearly, the past, the known, knowledge must come to an end.

We are asking ourselves, you and I, if there is an altogether different approach in which there is no conflict, no contradiction. Where there is contradiction there is effort, and where there is effort there is conflict, conflict being either resistance or acceptance. Resistance is sheltering oneself behind ideas, hopes, fears; acceptance becomes imitation. We are always swimming against the current—that's our life. Is it possible to move, to live, to be, to function in such a way that there is no current against which we must battle? The more there is conflict, the more there is tension. From that tension there is every form of neurosis and every psychotic state. A human being in tension may have a certain capacity, and that capacity through that tension may be expressed in writing, in music, in ten different ways.

I am trying to convey or, rather, to communicate nonverbally; though one must use words, yet one knows that the word is not the fact, the thing. Instead of always approaching reality through discipline, conflict, acceptance, denial, the things that man has practiced for centuries upon centuries to find out something, is it possible to explode and in that very explosion to have a new state of mind come into being? Can the old mind, which still has in it the animal, the old mind which is seeking comfort, security, which is afraid, anxious, lonely, painfully aware of its own limitations—can that old mind come to an end immediately and a new mind operate? Is the problem stated clearly?

Let me put it in a different way. Thought has created these problems. Thought has said, "I must find God, I must have security; this is my country, this is not your country; you are a

German, I'm a Frenchman, you are a Russian, you are a communist; you're this, that; my God, your God; I'm a writer, you're not a writer; you're inferior, I'm superior; you're spiritual, I'm not spiritual." Thought has built the social structure in which we are, of which we are. Thought is responsible for this whole confusion. Thought has created it, and if thought says, "I must change all this in order to be different," it will create a structure perhaps dissimilar in some respects, but similar because it's still the action of thought. Thought has divided the world into nationalities, into religious groups; thought has bred fear. Thought has said, "I'm much more important than you"; thought has said, "I must love my neighbor."

Thought has created this hierarchy of priests, saviors, gods, concepts, formulas; and if thought says, "This is wrong; I'll create a new set of activities, a new set of beliefs, a new set of structures," they will be similar, though somewhat dissimilar: they are still the result of thought. . . .

To find anything totally different, you must not only understand the origin of thought, the beginning of thought, but also whether it is possible for thought to come to an end so that a new process can begin. This is an extraordinarily important question. You can't agree or disagree; you don't know; you probably have not even thought about it, and so you can't say you understand or you don't understand. You may say, "Yes, I understand in the sense that I can follow verbally, intellectually, what you are talking about," but this is entirely different from actually understanding the fact. Thought has created wars by dividing men into Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, Indians, Russians. Thought has divided the world into fields, into areas of belief, with their saviors, with their gods, and each one has its God! People have fought against each other. All this thought has bred, and thought says, "I see this; it is a fact; now I will create a different world." . . . Every revolution tries to do this, but it eventually comes back to the same circle.

Thought has created philosophies, formulas according to which we try to live. . . . Thought cannot create a new world. This doesn't mean that sentiment will create a new world; on the contrary, it won't. We must find a different energy which is not the energy brought about by thought, a different energy which will function at a different dimension. Its very activities in its functioning are in this world, not in a world of escape, in a monastery, on top of the Himalayas, in some cave, in some absurd business. That's what we are going to find out. I am quite sure that there is a different way of living, but it is not a world in which thought functions. We must go into the origin of thinking, the beginning of thinking, and find out what thinking means, what its structure is, its mechanism. When the mind, the total entity, understands, gives complete attention to understanding the structure of thought, then we begin to have a different kind of energy. This has nothing whatever to do with self-fulfillment, with seeking, with wanting—all that disappears. Our concern will be to understand together. It's not just you listening and the speaker putting out certain words. Together we are going to find out the origin of thinking. . . .

. . . Thought can function fully and completely, with reason and health, without any neurotic states, where it is necessary. But there is a field in which thought doesn't function at all; in that field a revolution can take place, the new can take place. That's what we are going to uncover for ourselves as we go along.

Paris, 1st Public Talk, May 15, 1966
Collected Works, Vol. XVI, pp. 159-64

Freeing the Mind from Conditioning

I say it is definitely possible for the mind to be free from all conditioning.

. . . Most of us reject one particular form of conditioning and find another form, a wider, more significant or more pleasant conditioning. You give up one religion and take on another, reject one form of belief and accept another. Such substitution is obviously not understanding life, life being relationship. Our problem is how to be free from all conditioning. Either you say it is impossible, that no human mind can ever be free from conditioning, or you begin to experiment, to inquire, to discover. If you assert that it is impossible, obviously you are out of the running. Your assertion may be based on limited or wide experience or on the mere acceptance of a belief, but such assertion is the denial of search, of research, of inquiry, of discovery. To find out if it is possible for the mind to be completely free from all conditioning, you must be free to inquire and to discover.

Now, I say it is definitely possible for the mind to be free from all conditioning—not that you should accept my authority. If you accept it on authority, you will never discover, it will be another substitution, and that will have no significance. When I say it is possible, I say it because for me it is a fact and I can show it to you verbally, but if you are to find the truth of it for yourself, you must experiment with it and follow it swiftly.

The First and Last Freedom, pp. 224-5

Krishnamurti's Approach: Awareness, Attention, Self-knowledge, Meditation

When the mind is choicelessly aware that it is conditioned, in this awareness there comes a state which is not conditioned.

Sydney, 2nd Public Talk, November 12, 1955
Collected Works, Vol. IX, p. 145

By simply being aware of the whole process of your conditioning—without justification or condemnation—you will see that you are introducing a new factor altogether.

To free the mind from all conditioning, you must see the totality of it without thought. This is not a conundrum; experiment with it and you will see. Do you ever see anything without thought? Have you ever listened, looked, without bringing in this whole process of reaction? You will say that it is impossible to see without thought; you will say no mind can be unconditioned. When you say that, you have already blocked yourself by thought, for the fact is, you do not know.

So, can I look, can the mind be aware of its conditioning? I think it can. Please experiment. Can you be aware that you are a Hindu, a socialist, a communist, this or that, just be aware without saying that it is right or wrong? Because it is such a difficult task, just to see, we say it is impossible. I say it is only when you are aware of this totality of your being without any reaction, that the conditioning goes, totally, deeply, which is really the freedom from the self.

Do not immediately translate this into the terms of what you now believe or do not believe, for the whole of that is the self, and thought, which is the reaction of the self, cannot act

upon the self without adding to it. Do you not see this? And yet, that is what we are doing all the time. Whereas, if you see the truth that thought cannot break this conditioning because all thought, analysis, probing, introspection is merely a reaction to your present state, then you are only aware of the conditioning. In that awareness, there is no choice because choice again brings thought into being. Therefore, to be aware of this conditioning implies no choice, no condemnation, no justification, no comparison, but just to be aware. When you are so aware, your mind is already free of that conditioning. By simply being aware of the whole process of your conditioning, you will see that you are introducing a new factor altogether, a factor in which there is no identification with or rejection of the self; and that factor is the release, the wiping away of all conditioning. That is why I suggest to you that you experiment until we meet again, that you so observe and be aware.

Poona, 3rd Public Talk, September 14, 1958
Collected Works, Vol. XI, pp. 33-4

Can we not be aware of that conditioning . . . so easily and deeply that the very process of conditioning—which is, after all, the desire to be secure, the desire to have permanency—is burned away at the root?

. . . All thinking, obviously, is conditioned; there is no such thing as free thinking. Thinking can never be free: it is the outcome of our conditioning, of our background, of our culture, of our climate, of our social, economic, political background. The very books that you read and the very practices that you do are all established in the background, and any thinking must be the result of that background. So, if we can be aware—and we can go presently into what it signifies, what it

means, to be aware—perhaps we shall be able to uncondition the mind without the process of will, without the determination to uncondition the mind. Because the moment you determine, there is an entity who wishes, an entity who says, "I must uncondition my mind." That entity itself is the outcome of our desire to achieve a certain result, so a conflict is already there. So, is it possible to be aware of our conditioning, just to be aware?—in which there is no conflict at all. That very awareness, if allowed, may perhaps burn away the problems.

After all, we all feel there is something beyond our own thinking, our own petty problems, our sorrows. There are moments, perhaps, when we experience that state. But, unfortunately, that very experiencing becomes a hindrance to the further discovery of greater things because our minds hold on to something that we have experienced. We think that it is the real, and so we cling to it, but that very clinging obviously prevents the experiencing of something much greater.

So, the question is: Can the mind which is conditioned look at itself, be aware of its own conditioning, without any choice, be aware without any comparison, without any condemnation, and see whether in that awareness the particular problem, the particular thought, is not burned away totally at the root? Surely, any form of accumulation, either of knowledge or experience, any form of ideal, any projection of the mind, any determined practice to shape the mind—what it should be and should not be—all this is obviously crippling the process of investigation and discovery. If one really goes into it and deeply thinks about it, one will see that the mind must be totally free from all conditioning for religious freedom. And it is only in that religious freedom that all our problems, whatever they be, are solved.

So, I think our inquiry must be not for the solution of our immediate problems but rather to find out whether the mind—

the conscious as well as the deep unconscious mind in which is stored all the tradition, the memories, the inheritance of racial knowledge—whether all of it can be put aside. I think it can be done only if the mind is capable of being aware without any sense of demand, without any pressure—just to be aware. I think it is one of the most difficult things, to be so aware, because we are caught in the immediate problem and in its immediate solution, and so our lives are very superficial. Though one may go to all the analysts, read all the books, acquire much knowledge, attend churches, pray, meditate, practice various disciplines, nevertheless, our lives are obviously very superficial because we do not know how to penetrate deeply. I think the understanding, the way of penetration, how to go very, very deeply, lies through awareness just to be aware of our thoughts and feelings, without condemnation, without comparison—just to observe. You will see, if you will experiment, how extraordinarily difficult it is, because our whole training is to condemn, to approve, to compare. . . .

So, can we really consider this—not as a collective group experiencing something, which is comparatively easy, but as individuals—can we really inquire and find out for ourselves to what degree and depth we are conditioned? And, can we not be aware of that conditioning without any reaction to it, without condemning it, without trying to alter it, without substituting a new conditioning for the old, but be aware so easily and deeply that the very process of conditioning—which is, after all, the desire to be secure, the desire to have permanency—is burned away at the root? Can we discover that for ourselves—not because someone else has talked about it—and be aware of it directly so that the very root, the very desire to be secure, to have permanency, is burned away? It is this desire to have permanency, either in the future or in the past, to hold on to the accumulation of experience, that gives one the sense of security—and cannot that be burned away? Because, it is that which

creates conditioning. This desire which most of us have, to know and in that very knowing to find security, to have experience which gives us strength—can we wipe away all that?—not by volition, but burn it all away in awareness so that the mind is free from all its desires and that which is eternal can come into being.

I think that is the only revolution—not the communist or any other form of revolution. They do not solve our problems; on the contrary, they increase them, they multiply our sorrows, which again is very obvious. Surely, the only true revolution is the freeing of the mind from its own conditioning, and therefore from society—not the mere reformation of society. The man who reforms society is still caught in society, but the man who is free of society, being free from conditioning, he will act in his own way, which will act again upon society. So, our problem is not reformation, how to improve society, how to have a better welfare state, whether communist or socialist or what you will. It is not an economic or political revolution, or peace through terror. For a serious man these are not the problems. His real problem is to find out whether the mind can be totally free from all conditioning, and thereby perhaps discover, in that extraordinary silence, that which is beyond all measurement.

London, 1st Public Talk, June 17, 1955
Collected Works, Vol. IX, pp. 35-6

1. Awareness, Attention

By awareness I mean a state of watchfulness in which there is no choice.

By *awareness* I mean a state of watchfulness in which there is no choice. You are simply observing *what is*. But you cannot observe *what is* if you have an idea or an opinion about what you see, saying it is good or bad, or otherwise evaluating it. You have to be totally aware of the movements of your own thought, of your own feeling; you have to observe your own activities, both conscious and unconscious, without evaluation. This demands an extraordinarily alert, active mind. But, with most of us, the mind is dull, half asleep; only parts of it are active, the specialized parts, from which we function automatically through association, through memory, like an electronic brain. To be alert, active, sensitive, the mind must have space in which to look at things without the background of what it already knows; and it is one of the functions of meditation to bring tremendous alertness, activity, and sensitivity to the mind.

Are you following all this?

To be aware is to watch your bodily activity, the way you walk, the way you sit, the movements of your hands; it is to hear the words you use, to observe all your thoughts, all your emotions, all your reactions. It includes awareness of the unconscious, with its traditions, its instinctual knowledge, and the immense sorrow it has accumulated—not only personal sorrow, but the sorrow of man. You have to be aware of all that; and you cannot be aware of it if you are merely judging, evaluating, saying, "This is good and that is bad, This I will keep and that I will reject," all of which only makes the mind dull, insensitive.

From awareness comes attention. Attention flows from awareness when in that awareness there is no choice, no per-

sonal choosing, no experiencing—which I will go into presently—but merely observing. And, to observe, you must have in the mind a great deal of space. A mind that is caught in ambition, greed, envy, in the pursuit of pleasure and self-fulfillment, with its inevitable sorrow, pain, despair, anguish—such a mind has no space in which to observe, to attend. It is crowded with its own desires, going round and round in its own backwaters of reaction. You cannot attend if your mind is not highly sensitive, sharp, reasonable, logical, sane, healthy, without the slightest shadow of neuroticism. The mind has to explore every corner of itself, leaving no spot uncovered, because if there is a single dark corner of one's mind which one is afraid to explore, from that springs illusion.

When the Christian sees the Christ in his meditation, in his contemplation, he thinks he has achieved something extraordinary, but his visions are merely the projections of his own conditioning. It is the same with the Hindu who sits on the bank of a river and goes into a state of ecstasy. He too has visions born of his own conditioning, and what he sees is therefore not a religious experience at all. But, through awareness, through choiceless observation—which is possible only when in the mind there is space to observe—every form of conditioning is dissolved, and then the mind is no longer Hindu, Buddhist, or Christian because all ideas, beliefs, hopes, and fears have completely gone. From this comes attention—not attention given *to* something, but a state of attention in which there is no experiencer and therefore no experience. This is tremendously important to understand for a man who is really seeking to find out what is truth, what is religion, what is God, what is beyond the things put together by the mind.

In the state of attention there is no reaction: one is merely attending. The mind has explored and understood all the recesses of itself, all the unconscious motives, demands, fulfillments, urges, sorrows; therefore, in the state of atten-

tion, there is space, emptiness; there is no experiencer who is experiencing something. Being empty, the mind is not projecting, seeking, wanting, hoping. It has understood all its own reactions and responses, its depth, its shallowness, and there is nothing left. There is no division between the observer and the thing observed. The moment there is a division between the observer and the observed, there is conflict—the very gap between them is the conflict. We have gone into that, and we have seen how important it is to be completely free of conflict. . . .

Now, it is only in the state of attention that you can be a light unto yourself, and then every action of your daily life springs from that light—every action—whether you are doing your job, cooking, going for a walk, mending clothes, or what you will. This whole process is meditation. . .

Saanen, 8th Public Talk, July 23, 1963
Collected Works, Vol. XIII, pp. 321-3

2. Self-knowledge (Self-knowing)

To discover the whole process of self-knowledge we have to be aware in relationship.

Self-knowledge, surely, is not mere learning a particular kind of thinking. Self-knowledge is not based on ideas, belief, or conclusion. It must be a living thing; otherwise, it ceases to be self-knowledge and becomes mere information. There is a difference between information—which is knowledge—and wisdom, which is knowing the processes of our thoughts and feelings. But most of us are caught up in information, superficial knowledge, and so we are incapable of going much deeper into the problem. To discover the whole process of self-knowledge, we have to be aware in relationship. Relationship

is the only mirror we have, a mirror that will not distort, a mirror in which we can exactly and precisely see our thought unfolding itself. Isolation, which many people seek, is the surreptitious building up of resistance against relationship. Isolation obviously prevents the understanding of relationship: relationship with people, with ideas, with things. As long as we don't know our relationship, actually *what is,* between ourselves and our property, ourselves and people, ourselves and ideas, obviously there must be confusion and conflict.

Colombo, Ceylon, 2nd Public Talk, January 1, 1950
Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 53

We must first see the importance, the necessity, of understanding oneself for, without understanding oneself, no problem can be resolved, and the wars, the antagonisms, the envy and strife will continue.

So, we must first see the importance, the necessity, of understanding oneself for, without understanding oneself, no problem can be resolved, and the wars, the antagonisms, the envy and strife will continue. A man who would really understand truth must have a mind that is quiet, and that quietness can come only through the understanding of himself. Tranquillity of the mind does not come through discipline, through control, through subjugation, but only when the problems, which are the projections of oneself, are completely understood. Only when the mind is quiet, when it is not projecting itself, is it possible for the real to be. That is, for reality to come into being, the mind must be quiet—not made quiet, not controlled, subjugated, or suppressed, but silent spontaneously because of its understanding of the whole structure of the 'me', with all its memories, limitations, and conflicts. When

all this is completely and truly understood, the mind is quiet, and then only is it possible to know that which is real.

New York, 1st Public Talk, June 4, 1950
Collected Works, Vol. VI, p. 179

Without self-knowledge, do what you will, reform, have every kind of revolution . . . you will never create a world in which the individual becomes a total being and so can influence society.

So, what is of importance for a religious man is not the repetition of what he has learned from books or the experiences which his conditioning has projected, but his being concerned with the understanding of himself—without any delusion, without any warping, without any twist—to see things in himself as they are. And to see things as they actually are is an enormous task. I do not know if you have ever done it. I do not know if you have ever observed anything without coloring it, without twisting it, without naming it. I suggest you try, for a change, to look at what you call *greed* or *envy,* and see how difficult it is to look at it because the very word *greed, envy,* carries with it a condemnatory significance. You may be a greedy man, an ambitious man, but to look at ambition, the feeling, the sensation, without condemning it—just to look at—it requires, as you will see, extraordinary capacity.

All this is a part of self-knowledge and, without self-knowledge, do what you will, reform, have every kind of revolution, super-leaders, super-politicians, you will never create a world in which the individual becomes a total being and so can influence society.

Madras, 1st Public Talk, October 22, 1958
Collected Works, Vol. XI, pp. 61-2

In self-knowledge is the whole universe; it embraces all the struggles of humanity.

Questioner [young student]: How can we know ourselves?

KRISHNAMURTI: To know oneself is the very purpose of all education. Without self-knowledge, merely to gather facts or take notes so that you can pass examinations is a stupid way of existence. You may be able to quote the *Bhagavad Gita,* the *Upanishads,* the Koran and the Bible, but unless you know yourself you are like a parrot repeating words. Whereas, the moment you begin to know yourself, however little, there is already set going an extraordinary process of creativeness. It is a discovery to suddenly see yourself as you actually are: greedy, quarrelsome, angry, envious, stupid. To see the fact without trying to alter it, just to see exactly what you are, is an astonishing revelation. From there, you can go deeper and deeper, infinitely, because there is no end to self-knowledge.

Through self-knowledge, you begin to find out what is God, what is truth, what is that state which is timeless. Your teacher may pass on to you the knowledge which he received from *his* teacher, and you may do well in your examinations, get a degree, and all the rest of it; but, without knowing yourself as you know your own face in the mirror, all other knowledge has very little meaning. Learned people who don't know themselves are really unintelligent; they don't know what thinking is, what life is. That is why it is important for the educator to be educated in the true sense of the word, which means that he must know the workings of his own mind and heart, see himself exactly as he is in the mirror of relationship. Self-knowledge is the beginning of wisdom. In self-knowledge is the whole universe; it embraces all the struggles of humanity.

Think on These Things, pp. 111-13

Your mind is humanity, and when you perceive this, you will have immense compassion.

Freedom lies outside the walls, outside the pattern of society, but to be free of that pattern you have to understand the whole content of it, which is to understand your own mind. It is the mind that has created the present civilization, this tradition-bound culture or society and, without understanding your own mind, merely to revolt as a communist, a socialist, this or that, has very little meaning. That is why it is very important to have self-knowledge, to be aware of all your activities, your thoughts and feelings; and this is education, is it not? Because, when you are fully aware of yourself, your mind becomes very sensitive, very alert.

You try this—not someday in the far-away future, but tomorrow or this afternoon. If there are too many people in your room, if your home is crowded, then go away by yourself, sit under a tree or on the river bank and quietly observe how your mind works. Don't correct it, don't say, "This is right, that is wrong," but just watch it as you would a film. When you go to the cinema you are not taking part in the film; the actors and actresses are taking part, but you are only watching. In the same way, watch how your mind works. It is really very interesting, far more interesting than any film, because your mind is the residue of the whole world and it contains all that human beings have experienced. Do you understand? Your mind is humanity, and when you perceive this, you will have immense compassion. Out of this understanding comes great love; and then you will know, when you see lovely things, what beauty is.

Think on These Things, p. 80

3. Meditation

To me, meditation is something entirely different from what your books and your gurus have taught you. Meditation is the process of understanding your own mind.

Questioner: Even at the time of meditation one doesn't seem able to perceive what is true; so, will you please tell us what is true?

KRISHNAMURTI: Let us leave for the moment the question of what is true and consider first what is meditation. To me, meditation is something entirely different from what your books and your gurus have taught you. Meditation is the process of understanding your own mind. If you don't understand your own thinking, which is self-knowledge, whatever you think has very little meaning. Without the foundation of self-knowledge, thinking leads to mischief. Every thought has a significance; and, if the mind is incapable of seeing the significance, not just of one or two thoughts but of each thought as it arises, then merely to concentrate on a particular idea, image, or set of words—which is generally called *meditation*—is a form of self-hypnosis.

Think on These Things, p. 189

To be choicelessly aware of everything about you and within yourself, is meditation.

What I am talking about is something entirely different: freeing the mind, through intense alertness, from all its reactions, and thereby bringing about—without control, without deliberate will—a state of inward quietness. It is only the very intense, highly sensitive mind that can be really quiet, not a mind that is paralyzed by fear, by sorrow, by joy, or dead-

ened by conformity to innumerable social and psychological demands.

Real meditation is the highest form of intelligence. It is not a matter of sitting cross-legged in a corner with your eyes shut or standing on your head or whatever it is you do. To meditate is to be completely aware as you are walking, as you are riding in the bus, as you are working in your office or in your kitchen—completely aware of the words you use, the gestures you make, the manner of your talk, the way you eat, and how you push people around. To be choicelessly aware of everything about you and within yourself, is meditation. If you are thus aware of the political and religious propaganda that goes on ceaselessly, aware of the many influences about you, you will see how quickly you understand and are free of every influence as you come into contact with it.

But very few people ever go that far because they are so conditioned by their traditions. This is particularly true if one happens to live in India, where people must absolutely do certain things: they must control the body completely and thereby completely control their thought. Through this control, they hope to reach the supreme, but what they reach will be the result of their own self-hypnosis. In the Christian world you do the same thing in a different way. But what I am talking about is something that requires the highest form of intelligence.

Saanen, 8th Public Talk, July 23, 1963
Collected Works, Vol. XIII, p. 323

This slowing down of thinking and the examining of every thought is the process of meditation.

So, whether you are sitting quietly, talking, or playing, are you aware of the significance of every thought, of every

reaction that you happen to have? Try it and you will see how difficult it is to be aware of every movement of your own thought, because thoughts pile up so quickly one on top of another. But if you want to examine every thought, if you really want to see the content of it, then you will find that your thoughts slow down and you can watch them. This slowing down of thinking and the examining of every thought is the process of meditation; and if you go into it you will find that, by being aware of every thought, your mind—which is now a vast storehouse of restless thoughts all battling against each other—becomes very quiet, completely still. There is then no urge, no compulsion, no fear in any form; and, in this stillness, that which is true comes into being. There is no 'you' who experiences truth but, the mind being still, truth comes into it. . . .

Think on These Things, p. 190

When the mind is completely quiet, without any illusion, without any kind of self-hypnosis, there is the coming into being of something which is not put together by the mind.

So, first there is an awareness, a choiceless observation of all your thoughts and feelings, of everything that you do. Out of that there comes a state of attention which has no frontier, but in which the mind can concentrate, and from this state of attention there is quietness of the mind. And, when the mind is completely quiet, without any illusion, without any kind of self-hypnosis, there is the coming into being of something which is not put together by the mind.

You see, now comes the difficulty of trying to express in words something which is inexpressible—and that something is what we are seeking. We all want to find something beyond this world of agony, of tyranny, of force and subjugation, this world which is so indifferent, callous, brutal. With our ambi-

tions, our nationalisms, our diplomacy, our lies, we are continually precipitating the horrors of war; and, being weary of all that, we want peace. We want to find somewhere a state of quietness, of bliss, so we invent a God, a savior, or another world which offers us the peace we want if we will do or believe certain things. But a conditioned mind, however much it may want peace, brings about its own destruction, and that is what is actually going on in the world. All the politicians throughout the world, whether of the right or of the left, use that word *peace,* but it has no meaning at all. What I am talking about is something far beyond all that.

So, meditation is the emptying of the mind of all the things that the mind has put together. If you do that—perhaps you won't, but it doesn't matter, just listen to this—you will find that there is an extraordinary space in the mind, and that space is freedom. So, you must demand freedom at the very beginning, and not just wait, hoping to have it at the end. You must seek out the significance of freedom in your work, in your relationships, in everything that you do. Then you will find that meditation is creation.

Saanen, 8th Public Talk, July 23, 1963
Collected Works, Vol. XIII, p. 324

When the mind is totally aware of its conditioning, there is only the mind; there is no 'you' separate from the mind.

You see, when the mind is totally aware of its conditioning, there is only the mind; there is no 'you' separate from the mind. But, when the mind is only partially aware of its conditioning, it divides itself, it dislikes its conditioning or says it is a good thing; and, as long as there is condemnation, judgment, or comparison, there is incomplete understanding of conditioning, and therefore the perpetuation of that conditioning.

Whereas, if the mind is aware of its conditioning without condemning or judging, but merely watching it, then there is a total perception, and you will find, if you so perceive it, that the mind frees itself from that conditioning.

Varanasi, 1st Public Talk, January 9, 1955
Collected Works, Vol. VIII, p. 266

The understanding of experience, ambition, and envy is the right foundation for meditation.

Please listen to what is being said. See how your life has become what it is—the misery, the sorrow, the everlasting struggle from the moment you are born to the moment you die, the pain, the ache, the anxiety, the fear, the guilt, the innumerable aches that one has, the boredom, the responsibilities, the duties in which there is no love, no affection—there is nothing left. That is your life, and you are not going to alter it because I am talking. But you will alter it without your knowing it if you listen to something which is factual, which is true, which is not propaganda, which is not trying to force you to do something or to think in one way or another. If you are aware of the very factual existence of your life—the pain, the misery, the shallowness of it all—from that awareness of the fact there comes the mutation, without effort. All that is all we are concerned with, just to see the facts. And with what clarity you see the fact is important—not what you are going to do about the fact. You cannot do anything about the fact because your life is much too limited: you are conditioned. Your family and your society are too monstrous—they won't let you. Only a few can break through, unfortunately. But, if you are merely listening, if you are merely seeing the fact—what it is actually, how miserable, how boring, how shallow all of it is—that very observation of the fact is enough. It will do something to you if

you don't oppose it, if you don't say, "I can't do anything about it, and therefore I will run away from it." Look at it every day of your life, be aware of it first. And then, out of that awareness, there comes an action without effort, and therefore that action is never envious, never acquisitive.

So, when you have understood experience . . . have understood ambition and envy which are the very nature of our petty, shallow social existence and economic life, that is the foundation for further inquiry. Without that foundation—do what you will—you can go no further. Without that foundation—without understanding, both at the conscious level and also at the deep unconscious level, the whole process of experience, the corrupting influence of ambition, and the shallowness of envy—you cannot proceed further. That foundation becomes the foundation for meditation. That is the beauty of meditation. Meditation is something extraordinary.

That foundation for meditation is the foundation in righteousness—not the social righteousness or economic righteousness, but the righteousness of self-understanding. When the mind has laid that foundation, what happens to thinking? Then, what is the place of thought? We have exercised thought in order to acquire; we have exercised thought in order to fulfill, in order to become; we have exercised thought in order to experience more and to choose and to avoid experience.

So, when you have understood experience, ambition, and envy, what is the place of thinking? Is there thinking at all then? Or, is there a different action taking place which is not the result of thought, which is a response of memory? So, the inquiry into the meaning of thought and what is the place of thought and of action—both the collective and the individual—is the inquiry which comes when you have laid the foundation. Without that foundation, you cannot possibly inquire into the nature and the ending of thought, or what happens to thought. Mere control of thought is still a contradiction. Control im-

plies suppression, control implies restriction, control implies discipline. A mind that is disciplined according to a pattern—social, religious, or other kind of pattern—can never be free. It will always be disciplined according to patterns; therefore, it is incapable of being free, and therefore incapable of laying the right foundation and of inquiring into the significance of thought.

As I was saying, we see the significance of control, its limitation. In control there is discipline, limitation, suppression, and therefore perpetual conflict. When you have understood that, gone into it very, very deeply, then there comes out of it an awareness, and that awareness can concentrate without limitation. But a mind which has disciplined itself to control itself can never be aware, whereas awareness can concentrate without making itself limited. So, you will see that when you have understood that awareness, when you have the understanding of experience, of the significance of ambition, and of the nature of envy, you have laid the foundation in yourself—not through effort—because you have understood by merely seeing the fact. The understanding of the fact gives you energy; therefore, the fact never creates a problem. You create a problem of the fact, but the fact never creates a problem, if you can look at the fact scientifically, objectively. Then you can proceed to find out, you can see, what the place of thought is.

Is there thinking if you are no longer seeking experience? Your mind is driven by ambition, by success, and wants to reach God—that is also ambition. If you are no longer acquisitive, either in worldly things or inwardly—which means no longer acquiring, demanding more and more experience, more and more sensations, more and more feelings, more and more visions—then there is no place for thought. Then, from that, you will find the brain becomes extraordinarily quiet. The brain so far has been used for these purposes, and when these pur-

poses are gone into, examined rationally, sanely, healthily, and understood, the brain is out of all that. Then that brain becomes extraordinarily quiet, naturally, not because it wants to get somewhere, not because it has not understood the monstrous discontent, failure, and despair. It has understood all these, and therefore the brain becomes highly sensitive, very alert, but very quiet. Again, that is the basis for meditation.

Now, a quiet brain can watch without distortion. Because it has understood thought and feeling, it is no longer seeking experience, and therefore such a brain observes without distortion. Because it is not concerned with any experience, it is like watching the fact, the bacilli, through a microscope. You can only watch that way if you have laid the foundation and if you have gone into yourself very, very deeply. No books, no guru, no teacher, no savior can lead you further—they can only tell you, "Do this, don't do that, don't be ambitious, or be ambitious." When you yourself have laid the foundation, you become aware of this brain which is absolutely quiet and yet highly sensitive. Then that brain can watch what is actually going on; then it is not concerned with experience, not concerned with how to translate what it sees into words and therefore communicate it to another; it is merely watching. When you have gone that far, you will see that there is a movement which is out of time.

A mind, a brain, that is completely quiet without any reaction—which is an extremely difficult thing to do—is only an instrument of observation and therefore is extraordinarily alive and sensitive. Now, all that, from the beginning of what we have been talking about until now, is meditation. When you have gone so far in meditation, you will find for yourself that there is a movement, an action, out of time, a state which is immeasurable. And that you may call *God*—it has no meaning at all. That state is creation—not the writing of a poem, nor

the painting of a picture, nor putting a vision in marble; they are not creation, they are all mere expressions.

There is creation which is beyond time. Until we know that—*know* in the sense, not as knowledge—until there is a tremendous awareness of that state, our actions in daily life will have very little meaning. You may be very rich, you may be very prosperous, you may have a very good family, you may have all the things of the world, or you may be hankering after the things of the world, but, if you have not understood that thing, life becomes empty, shallow.

And mutation is only possible when you have brought about, through awareness, without any effort, the ending of all the things we have talked about: ambition, experience, conflict. Then, out of that, comes something that cannot be conveyed in words. It is not to be experienced. It is not something that you are going to seek, because all search has ended. All that is meditation. That has extraordinary beauty. There is a great sense of marvelous reality which cannot possibly be understood by a petty mind, by a mediocre mind that is repeating the Gita and the Upanishads, that is going after the guru and the mantram, the everlasting word. All that must come to an end. The brain must be totally empty of the known. Then only can the unknowable, perhaps, come into being.

Madras, 6th Public Talk, December 10, 1961
Collected Works, Vol. XII, pp. 311-13

It is only when the mind has understood itself totally, comprehended itself widely so that it is without any barrier and is dead to everything it has known—then only reality comes into being.

So, transformation of the individual can take place only when there is a total comprehension of the ways of the mind,

which is meditation. To understand oneself is a process in which there is no condemnation, no justification, but just seeing what one is, just observing without judging, without checking, controlling, or adjusting. The perception of what one is, without any evaluation, leads the mind to an extraordinary depth, and it is only at that depth that there is transformation; and, naturally, action from that depth of understanding is totally different from the action of adjustment.

So, I hope you, as an individual, have listened to these talks not merely to gather information, to be intellectually amused, excited, or emotionally stirred, but have learned about yourself in the process and therefore freed yourself. Because, from the beginning of these talks until now, we have been speaking about the actual, everyday state of the mind, and if you disregard it and say you are only interested in God, in what happens after death, then you will find that your God and your *after death* are only a set of speculative ideas which have no validity at all. To find what God is, if there is a God, you must come to it with a full being, with freshness, not with a mind that is decayed, burdened with its own experiences, broken and dwindled by discipline, and burned up with desires. A mind that is really passionate—and passion implies intensity and fullness—only such a mind can receive that which is immeasurable. That immeasurable cannot be found except as you dig deeper and deeper within yourself. Your repetition that there is the eternal is child's talk, and your seeking the eternal has no meaning either, for it is unknowable, inconceivable to the mind. The mind has to understand itself, to break the foundation of its learning, the frontiers of its own recognition, and that is the process of self-knowledge. What you need now is an inward revolution, a totally new approach to life, not new systems, new schools, new philosophies. Then, from this transformation, you will see that mind, as time, ceases. After all,

time is as the sea which is never still, never calm, everlastingly in motion, everlastingly restless, and our minds, based on time, are caught up in its movement.

So, only when you have totally understood yourself, the conscious as well as the unconscious, only then is there a quietness, a motionlessness which is creation. And that stillness is action, true action. Only, we never touch it, we never know it because we are wasting our energy, our time, our sorrow, our endeavor on things superficial.

So, the earnest man is he who through self-knowledge breaks down the walls of time and brings about a motionless state of mind. Then there is a benediction which comes into being without invitation; then there is a reality, a goodness which comes without your asking. If you crave it you will not get it, if you seek it you will not find it. It is only when the mind has understood itself totally, comprehended itself widely so that it is without any barrier and is dead to everything it has known, then only reality comes into being.

Bombay, 10th Public Talk, December 28, 1958
Collected Works, Vol. XI, pp. 152-3

VIII. Krishnamurti on Right Education:

Excerpts from talks to students, parents, and teachers, Rajghat School, India, 1952

We have never thought about *un*conditioning the adult mind and *not* conditioning the child. Surely, education is both curative and preventive.

Unfortunately, education at present is aimed at making you conform, fit into and adjust yourself to this acquisitive society. That is all your parents, your teachers, and your books are concerned with. As long as you conform, as long as you are ambitious, acquisitive, corrupting and destroying others in the pursuit of position and power, you are considered a respectable citizen. You are educated to fit into society; but that is not education, it is merely a process which conditions you to conform to a pattern. The real function of education is not to turn you out to be a clerk or a judge or a prime minister, but to help you understand the whole structure of this rotten society and allow you to grow in freedom so that you will break away and create a different society, a new world. There must be those who are in revolt, not partially but totally in revolt against the old, for it is only such people who can create a new world—a world not based on acquisitiveness, on power and prestige.

I can hear the older people saying, "It can never be done. Human nature is what it is, and you are talking nonsense." But we have never thought about *un*conditioning the adult mind

and *not* conditioning the child. Surely, education is both curative and preventive. You older students are already shaped, already conditioned, already ambitious; you want to be successful like your father, like the governor, or somebody else. So, the real function of education is not only to help you uncondition yourself, but also to understand this whole process of living from day to day so that you can grow in freedom and create a new world, a world that must be totally different from the present one. Unfortunately, neither your parents nor your teachers nor the public in general are interested in this. That is why education must be a process of educating the educator as well as the student.

Think on These Things, pp. 27-8

The function of education . . . is to give you . . . complete freedom to grow and create a different society, a new world.

Surely, education has no meaning unless it helps you to understand the vast expanse of life with all its subtleties, with its extraordinary beauty, its sorrows and joys. You may earn degrees, you may have a series of letters after your name and land a very good job, but then what? What is the point of it all if in the process your mind becomes dull, weary, stupid? So, while you are young, must you not seek to find out what life is all about? And, is it not the true function of education to cultivate in you the intelligence which will try to find the answer to all these problems? Do you know what intelligence is? It is the capacity, surely, to think freely, without fear, without a formula, so that you begin to discover for yourself what is real, what is true; but, if you are frightened, you will never be intelligent. Any form of ambition, spiritual or mundane, breeds anxiety, fear; therefore, ambition does not help to bring about a mind that is clear, simple, direct, and hence intelligent.

You know, it is really very important while you are young to live in an environment in which there is no fear. Most of us, as we grow older, become frightened; we are afraid of living, afraid of losing a job, afraid of tradition, afraid of what the neighbors, or what the wife or husband would say, afraid of death. Most of us have fear in one form or another; and where there is fear there is no intelligence. And, is it not possible for all of us, while we are young, to be in an environment where there is no fear but rather an atmosphere of freedom—freedom not just to do what we like, but to understand the whole process of living? Life is really very beautiful, it is not this ugly thing that we have made of it; and you can appreciate its richness, its depth, its extraordinary loveliness only when you revolt against everything—against organized religion, against tradition, against the present rotten society—so that you as a human being find out for yourself what is true. Not to imitate but to discover—*that* is education, is it not? It is very easy to conform to what your society or your parents and teachers tell you. That is a safe and easy way of existing; but that is not living because in it there is fear, decay, death. To live is to find out for yourself what is true, and you can do this only when there is freedom, when there is continuous revolution inwardly, within yourself.

But you are not encouraged to do this; no one tells you to question, to find out for yourself what God is, because if you were to rebel you would become a danger to all that is false. Your parents and society want you to live safely, and you also want to live safely. Living safely generally means living in imitation and therefore in fear. Surely, the function of education is to help each one of us to live freely and without fear, is it not? And to create an atmosphere in which there is no fear requires a great deal of thinking on your part as well as on the part of the teacher, the educator.

Do you know what this means, what an extraordinary thing it would be to create an atmosphere in which there is no fear? And we *must* create it, because we see that the world is caught up in endless wars; it is guided by politicians who are always seeking power; it is a world of lawyers, policemen, and soldiers, of ambitious men and women all wanting position and all fighting each other to get it. Then there are the so-called saints, the religious gurus with their followers; they also want power, position, here or in the next life. It is a mad world, completely confused, in which the communist is fighting the capitalist, the socialist is resisting both, and everybody is against somebody, struggling to arrive at a safe place, a position of power or comfort. The world is torn by conflicting beliefs, by caste and class distinctions, by separative nationalities, by every form of stupidity and cruelty—and this is the world you are being educated to fit into. You are encouraged to fit into the framework of this disastrous society; your parents want you to do that, and you also want to fit in.

Now, is it the function of education merely to help you to conform to the pattern of this rotten social order, or is it to give you freedom, complete freedom to grow and create a different society, a new world? We want to have this freedom, not in the future, but now, otherwise we may all be destroyed. We must create immediately an atmosphere of freedom so that you can live and find out for yourselves what is true, so that you become intelligent, so that you are able to face the world and understand it—not just conform to it—so that inwardly, deeply, psychologically you are in constant revolt. Because, it is only those who are in constant revolt that discover what is true, not the man who conforms, who follows some tradition. It is only when you are constantly inquiring, constantly observing, constantly learning, that you find truth, God, or love; and you cannot inquire, observe, learn, you cannot be deeply aware, if you are afraid. So, the function of education, surely, is to eradicate,

inwardly as well as outwardly, this fear that destroys human thought, human relationship, and love.

Think on These Things, pp. 10-12

It is the function of the teacher to help you to find out what you are, and he cannot help you to do that if he is comparing you with somebody else.

Comparison is the basis of our so-called education, and of our whole culture. The teacher is always saying that you must do as well as such-and-such a boy or girl, so you struggle to be as clever as they are. And what happens to you? You get more and more worried, physically ill, mentally worn out. Whereas, if the teacher does not compare you with anyone, but says, "Look here, old boy, be yourself. Let us find out what you are interested in, what your capacities are. Don't imitate, don't try to become like Rama, Sita, or Gandhiji, but be what you are and begin from there." If the teacher says that, then it is *you* who are important, not somebody else. It is the individual who is important and, by comparing a student with somebody who is cleverer, the teacher is belittling him, making him smaller, more stupid. It is the function of the teacher to help you to find out what you are, and he cannot help you to do that if he is comparing you with somebody else. Comparison destroys you, so don't compare yourself with another. You are as good as anybody. Understand what you are, and from there begin to find out how to be more fully, more freely, more expansively what you are.

Life Ahead, p. 154

Finding One's Vocation

Whatever it is, if you really love to do it, you are not ambitious, because in love there is no ambition.

Do you know what *vocation* means? Something which you love to do, which is natural to you. After all, that is the function of education: to help you to grow independently so that you are free of ambition and can find your true vocation. The ambitious man has never found his true vocation; if he had, he would not be ambitious.

To help you to discover your true vocation is very difficult, because it means that the teacher has to pay a great deal of attention to each student to find out what he is capable of. He has to help him not to be afraid, but to question, to investigate. You may be a potential writer, or a poet, or a painter. Whatever it is, if you really love to do it, you are not ambitious, because in love there is no ambition.

So, is it not very important while you are young that you should be helped to awaken your own intelligence and thereby find your true vocation? Then you will love what you do, right through life, which means there will be no ambition, no competition, no fighting another for position, for prestige; and then perhaps you will be able to create a new world. In that new world all the ugly things of the older generation will cease to exist—their wars, their mischief, their separative gods, their rituals which mean absolutely nothing, their sovereign governments, their violence. That is why the responsibility of the teachers, and of the students, is very great.

Life Ahead, pp. 65-6

Happiness is . . . not a thing to be sought after.

Happiness is . . . not a thing to be sought after. Happiness comes when you are doing something because you really love to do it, and not because it gives you riches or makes you a prominent person.

Life Ahead, p. 152

Inward richness implies standing alone . . .

To be inwardly rich is much more arduous than to be outwardly rich and famous; it needs much more care, much closer attention. If you have a little talent and know how to exploit it, you become famous; but inward richness does not come about in that way. To be inwardly rich, the mind has to understand and put away the things that are not important, like wanting to be famous. Inward richness implies standing alone; but the man who wants to be famous is afraid to stand alone because he depends on people's flattery and good opinion.

Think on These Things, p. 47

So, I think that a real school, through its students, should bring a blessing to the world. For the world needs a blessing; it is in a terrible state.

I think it is a curse to be ambitious. Ambition is a form of self-interest, self-enclosure, and therefore it breeds mediocrity of mind. To live in a world that is full of ambition without being ambitious means, really, to love something for itself without seeking a reward, a result; and that is very difficult, because the whole world, all your friends, your relations, everyone is struggling to succeed, to fulfill, to become somebody. But, to understand and be free of all this, and to do something

which you really love—no matter what it is, or however lowly and unrecognized—*that,* I think, awakens the spirit of greatness which never seeks approbation, recompense, which does things for their own sake and therefore has the strength and the capacity not to be caught in the influence of mediocrity.

I think it is very important to see this while you are young; because magazines, newspapers, television and radio constantly emphasize the worship of success, thereby encouraging ambition and competitiveness which breed mediocrity of mind. When you are ambitious, you are merely adjusting to a particular pattern of society, whether in America, Russia, or India, and therefore you are living on a very superficial level. When you leave school and enter college, and later face the world, it seems to me that what is important is not to succumb, not to bow your heads to various influences, but to meet and understand these as they are and see their true significance and their worth, in a gentle spirit with great inward strength which will not create further discord in the world.

So, I think that a real school, through its students, should bring a blessing to the world. For the world needs a blessing; it is in a terrible state. And the blessing can come only when we as individuals are not seeking power, when we are not trying to fulfill our personal ambitions, but have a clear understanding of the vast problems with which we are confronted. This demands great intelligence, which means, really, a mind that does not think according to any particular pattern, but is free in itself and is therefore capable of seeing what is true and putting aside that which is false.

Life Ahead, pp. 177-8

Fear and Discipline

Discipline at all costs should be avoided . . .

Most grown-up people think that some kind of discipline is necessary. Do you know what *discipline* is? It is a process of making you do something which you do not want to do. Where there is discipline, there is fear; so, discipline is not the way of love. That is why discipline at all costs should be avoided, discipline being coercion, resistance, compulsion, making you do something which you really do not understand, or persuading you to do it by offering you a reward. If you don't understand something, don't do it, and don't be compelled to do it. Ask for an explanation; don't just be obstinate, but try to find out the truth of the matter so that no fear is involved and your mind becomes very pliable, very supple.

Life Ahead, p. 96

Goodness comes into being only when you have intelligence, when you have love, when you have no fear.

Questioner: May I know why we should not fit into our parents' plans, since they want us to be good?

KRISHNAMURTI: Why should you fit into your parents' plans, however worthy, however noble they may be? . . . And, if you do fit in, what happens to you? You become a so-called good girl or good boy, and then what? Do you know what it means to be good? Goodness is not just doing what society says, or what your parents say. Goodness is something entirely different, is it not? Goodness comes into being only when you have intelligence, when you have love, when you have no fear.

You cannot be good if you are afraid. You can become respectable by doing what society demands and then society gives you a garland, it says what a good person you are; but merely being respectable is not being good.

Life Ahead, pp. 163-4

Fear cripples our thinking . . .

. . . the thing of first importance in education is to see to it that we are educated to be free from fear. Because, fear dulls our minds, fear cripples our thinking, fear makes for darkness, and as long as we are frightened we shall not create a new world.

Life Ahead, p. 149

So, it is very important from the tenderest age to help the child to see the implications of fear and to be free of it. The moment you are frightened, there is an end to freedom.

Questioner: How can we make our minds free when we live in a society full of tradition?

KRISHNAMURTI: First you must have the urge, the demand, to be free. It is like the longing of the bird to fly, or of the waters of the river to flow. Have you this urge to be free? If you have, then what will happen? Your parents and society try to force you into a mold. Can you resist them? You will find it difficult, because you are afraid: you are afraid of not getting a job, of not finding the right husband or the right wife; you are afraid you will starve, or that people will talk about you. Though you want to be free, you are afraid, so you are not going to resist. Your fear of what people may say or of what your parents may do, blocks you, and so you are forced into the mold.

Now, can you say, "I want to know, and I do not mind starving. Whatever happens, I am going to battle against the barriers of this rotten society, because I want to be free to find out." Can you say that? When you are frightened, can you withstand all these barriers, all these impositions?

So, it is very important from the tenderest age to help the child to see the implications of fear, and to be free of it. The moment you are frightened, there is an end to freedom.

Life Ahead, pp. 51-2

Education and Freedom

The function of education . . . is to help you from childhood not to imitate anybody, but to be yourself all the time.

I wonder if you have ever stopped to observe the marvelous glow in the west as the sun sets, with the shy young moon just over the trees? Often at that hour the river is very calm, and then everything is reflected on its surface: the bridge, the train that goes over it, the tender moon, and presently, as it grows dark, the stars. It is all very beautiful. And to observe, to watch, to give your whole attention to something beautiful, your mind must be free of preoccupations, must it not? It must not be occupied with problems, with worries, with speculations. It is only when the mind is very quiet that you can really observe, for then the mind is sensitive to extraordinary beauty; and perhaps here is a clue to our problem of freedom.

Now, what does it mean to be free? Is freedom a matter of doing what happens to suit you, going where you like, thinking what you will? This you do anyhow. Merely to have independence, does that mean freedom? Many people in the world are independent, but very few are free. Freedom implies

great intelligence, does it not? To be free is to be intelligent, but intelligence does not come into being by just wishing to be free; it comes into being only when you begin to understand your whole environment, the social, religious, parental and traditional influences that are continually closing in on you. But, to understand the various influences—the influence of your parents, of your government, of society, of the culture to which you belong, of your beliefs, your gods and superstitions, of the tradition to which you conform unthinkingly—to understand all these and become free from them requires deep insight; but you generally give in to them because inwardly you are frightened. You are afraid of not having a good position in life; you are afraid of what your priest will say; you are afraid of not following tradition, of not doing the right thing. But freedom is really a state of mind in which there is no fear or compulsion, no urge to be secure.

Whether in this world of politicians, power, position and authority, or in the so-called spiritual world where you aspire to be virtuous, noble, saintly, the moment you want to be somebody you are no longer free. But the man or the woman who sees the absurdity of all these things and whose heart is therefore innocent, and therefore not moved by the desire to be somebody—such a person is free. If you understand the simplicity of it you will also see its extraordinary beauty and depth.

Whether you follow the example of a Master, a saint, a teacher, a relative, or stick to a particular tradition, it all implies a demand on your part to *be* something; and it is only when you really understand this fact that there is freedom.

The function of education, then, is to help you from childhood not to imitate anybody, but to be yourself all the time. And this is a most difficult thing to do: whether you are ugly or beautiful, whether you are envious or jealous, always to be what you are, but understand it. To be yourself is very difficult, because you think that what you are is ignoble and that,

if you could only change what you are into something noble, it would be marvelous; but that never happens. Whereas, if you look at what you actually are and understand it, then in that very understanding there is a transformation. So, freedom lies not in trying to become something different, nor in doing whatever you happen to feel like doing, nor in following the authority of tradition, of your parents, of your *guru,* but in understanding what you are from moment to moment.

You see, you are not educated for this; your education encourages you to become something or other—but that is not the understanding of yourself. Your 'self' is a very complex thing; it is not merely the entity that goes to school, that quarrels, that plays games, that is afraid, but it is also something hidden, not obvious. It is made up not only of all the thoughts that you think, but also of all the things that have been put into your mind by other people, by books, by the newspapers, by your leaders; and it is possible to understand all that only when you don't want to be somebody, when you don't imitate, when you don't follow—which means, really, when you are in revolt against the whole tradition of trying to become something. That is the only true revolution, leading to extraordinary freedom. To cultivate this freedom is the real function of education. . . .

The hope of a new world is in those of you who begin to see what is false and revolt against it, not just verbally but actually. And that is why you should seek the right kind of education; for it is only when you grow in freedom that you can create a new world not based on tradition or shaped according to the idiosyncrasy of some philosopher or idealist. But there can be no freedom as long as you are merely trying to become somebody, or imitate a noble example.

Think on These Things, pp. 16-19

IX. Krishnamurti on War and Peace

To bring about peace in the world, to stop all wars, there must be a revolution in the individual, in you and me.

Questioner: How can we solve our present political chaos and the crisis in the world? Is there anything an individual can do to stop the impending war?

KRISHNAMURTI: War is the spectacular and bloody projection of our everyday life, is it not? War is merely an outward expression of our inward state, an enlargement of our daily action. It is more spectacular, more bloody, more destructive, but it is the collective result of our individual activities; therefore, you and I are responsible for war. And, what can we do to stop it? Obviously the ever-impending war cannot be stopped by you and me, because it is already in movement; it is already taking place, though at present chiefly on the psychological level. As it is already in movement, it cannot be stopped—the issues are too many, too great, and are already committed. But you and I, seeing that the house is on fire, can understand the causes of that fire, can go away from it and build in a new place with different materials that are not combustible, that will not produce other wars. That is all that we can do. You and I can see what creates wars, and if we are interested in stopping wars, then we can begin to transform ourselves, who are the causes of war.

An American lady came to see me a couple of years ago, during the war. She said she had lost her son in Italy and that she had another son aged sixteen whom she wanted to save, so we talked the thing over. I suggested to her that to save her son she had to cease to be an American; she had to cease to be greedy, cease piling up wealth, seeking power, domination, and be morally simple—not merely simple in clothes, in outward things, but simple in her thoughts and feelings, in her relationships. She said, "That is too much. You are asking far too much. I cannot do it, because circumstances are too powerful for me to alter." Therefore, she was responsible for the destruction of her son.

Circumstances can be controlled by us, because we have created the circumstances. Society is the product of relationship, of yours and mine together. If we change in our relationship, society changes; merely to rely on legislation, on compulsion, for the transformation of outward society, while remaining inwardly corrupt, while continuing inwardly to seek power, position, domination, is to destroy the outward, however carefully and scientifically built. That which is inward is always overcoming the outward.

What causes war—religious, political, or economic? Obviously belief, either in nationalism, in an ideology, or in a particular dogma. If we had no belief but goodwill, love and consideration between us, then there would be no wars. But we are fed on beliefs, ideas, and dogmas and therefore we breed discontent. The present crisis is of an exceptional nature and we as human beings must either pursue the path of constant conflict and continuous wars, which are the result of our everyday action, or else see the causes of war and turn our back upon them.

To bring about peace in the world, to stop all wars, there must be a revolution in the individual, in you and me. Economic revolution without this inward revolution is meaningless,

for hunger is the result of the maladjustment of economic conditions produced by our psychological states: greed, envy, ill-will, and possessiveness. To put an end to sorrow, to hunger, to war, there must be a psychological revolution, and few of us are willing to face that. We will discuss peace, plan legislation, create new leagues, the United Nations and so on and on; but we will not win peace because we will not give up our position, our authority, our money, our properties, our stupid lives. To rely on others is utterly futile: others cannot bring us peace. No leader is going to give us peace, no government, no army, no country. What will bring peace is inward transformation which will lead to outward action. Inward transformation is not isolation, is not a withdrawal from outward action. On the contrary, there can be right action only when there is right thinking, and there is no right thinking when there is no self-knowledge. Without knowing yourself, there is no peace.

To put an end to outward war, you must begin to put an end to war in yourself. Some of you will nod your heads and say, "I agree," and go outside and do exactly the same as you have been doing for the last ten or twenty years. Your agreement is merely verbal and has no significance, for the world's miseries and wars are not going to be stopped by your casual assent. They will be stopped only when you realize the danger, when you realize your responsibility, when you do not leave it to somebody else. If you realize the suffering, if you see the urgency of immediate action and do not postpone, then you will transform yourself. Peace will come only when you yourself are peaceful, when you yourself are at peace with your neighbor.

The First and Last Freedom, pp. 182-5

Peace is not something . . . created by the mind . . . and it can be understood only when the heart is full.

We have been examining the various factors that bring about deterioration in our lives, in our activities, in our thoughts; and we have seen that conflict is one of the major factors of this deterioration. And is not peace also, as it is generally understood, a destructive factor? Can peace be brought about by the mind? If we have peace through the mind, does not that also lead to corruption, deterioration? If we are not very alert and observant, that word *peace* becomes like a narrow window through which we look at the world and try to understand it. Through a narrow window we can see only part of the sky and not the whole vastness, the magnificence of it. There is no possibility of having peace by merely pursuing peace, which is inevitably a process of the mind.

It may be a little difficult to understand this, but I shall try to make it as simple and clear as I can. If we can understand what it means to be peaceful, then perhaps we shall understand the real significance of love.

We think that peace is something to be achieved through the mind, through reason, but is it? Can peace ever come about through any quieting, through any control or domination of thought? We all want peace; and, for most of us, peace means to be left alone, not to be disturbed or interfered with, so we build a wall around our own mind, a wall of ideas.

It is very important for you to understand this, for as you grow older you will be faced with the problems of war and peace. Is peace something to be pursued, caught and tamed by the mind? What most of us call *peace* is a process of stagnation, a slow decay. We think we shall find peace by clinging to a set of ideas, by inwardly building a wall of security, safety, a wall of habits, beliefs; we think that peace is a matter of pursuing a principle, of cultivating a particular tendency, a particular

fancy, a particular wish. We want to live without disturbance, so we find some corner of the universe, or of our own being, into which we crawl, and we live in the darkness of self-enclosure. That is what most of us seek in our relationship with the husband, with the wife, with parents, with friends. Unconsciously, we want peace at any price, and so we pursue it.

But can the mind ever find peace? Is not the mind itself a source of disturbance? The mind can only gather, accumulate, deny, assert, remember, pursue. Peace is absolutely essential, because without peace we cannot live creatively. But is peace something to be realized through the struggles, the denials, the sacrifices of the mind? Do you understand what I am talking about?

We may be discontented while we are young, but as we grow older, unless we are very wise and watchful, that discontent will be canalized into some form of peaceful resignation to life. The mind is everlastingly seeking a secluded habit, belief, desire, something in which it can live and be at peace with the world. But the mind cannot find peace, because it can think only in terms of time, in terms of the past, the present, and the future: what it has been, what it is, and what it will be. It is constantly condemning, judging, weighing, comparing, pursuing its own vanities, its own habits, beliefs; and such a mind can never be peaceful. It can delude itself into a state which it calls peace, but that is not peace. The mind can mesmerize itself by the repetition of words and phrases, by following somebody, or by accumulating knowledge; but it is not peaceful, because such a mind is itself the center of disturbance, it is by its very nature the essence of time. So, the mind with which we think, with which we calculate, with which we contrive and compare, is incapable of finding peace.

Peace is not the outcome of reason; and yet, as you will see if you observe them, the organized religions are caught up

in this pursuit of peace through the mind. Real peace is as creative and as pure as war is destructive; and, to find that peace, one must understand beauty. That is why it is important, while we are very young, to have beauty about us: the beauty of buildings that have proper proportions, the beauty of cleanliness, of quiet talk among the elders. In understanding what beauty is, we shall know love, for the understanding of beauty is the peace of the heart.

Peace is of the heart, not of the mind. To know peace you have to find out what beauty is. The way you talk, the words you use, the gestures you make—these things matter very much, for through them you will discover the refinement of your own heart. Beauty cannot be defined, it cannot be explained in words. It can be understood only when the mind is very quiet.

So, while you are young and sensitive, it is essential that you—as well as those who are responsible for you—should create an atmosphere of beauty. The way you dress, the way you walk, the way you sit, the way you eat—all these things, and the things about you, are very important. As you grow up you will meet the ugly things of life, ugly buildings, ugly people with their malice, envy, ambition, cruelty. And, if in your heart there is not founded and established the perception of beauty, you will easily be swept away by the enormous current of the world. Then you will get caught in the endless struggle to find peace through the mind. The mind projects an idea of what peace is and tries to pursue it, thereby getting caught in the net of words, in the net of fancies and illusions.

Peace can come only when there is love. If you have peace merely through security, financial or otherwise, or through certain dogmas, rituals, verbal repetitions, there is no creativeness; there is no urgency to bring about a fundamental revolution in the world. Such peace only leads to contentment and resignation. But, when in you there is the understanding of love and beauty, then you will find the peace that is not a mere projec-

tion of the mind. It is this peace that is creative, that removes confusion and brings order within oneself. But this peace does not come through any effort to find it. It comes when you are constantly watching, when you are sensitive to both the ugly and the beautiful, to the good and the bad, to all the fluctuations of life. Peace is not something petty, created by the mind; it is enormously great, infinitely extensive, and it can be understood only when the heart is full.

Life Ahead, pp. 127-30

X. In Summation

Now, what is a man to do who sees exactly what is taking place in the world, and who really wants to find out if God, truth, is an actuality or merely a clever invention of the priest? After all, you and I are the result of the collective, are we not? And there must be individual human beings who have completely broken away from the collective, from society, who are free from conditioning, not in layers or in spots, but totally, for it is only such individuals who can find out what truth or God is—not the man of tradition, not the man who does *japa*, rings the bell, quotes the Gita, and goes to the temple every day. It is the irreligious people who do that. But the man who really wants to find out what this extraordinary movement of living is must not only understand the process of his own conditioning, but be able to go beyond it. Because, the mind can find out what is true only when it is free from all conditioning, not when it merely repeats certain words or quotes the sacred books. Such a mind is not free.

So, it is extraordinarily difficult in this world for the mind to be free. The politician and the so-called religious person talk about freedom—that is one of their catchwords—but they jolly well take care that you are not free because, the moment you are free, you obviously become a danger to society, to organized religion, to all the rotten things that exist about you. It is only the free mind that will find out what is true, it is only

the free mind that can be creative; and it is essential, in a culture of this kind, that importance be given, not to the following of a pattern, a doctrine, or a tradition, but to allowing the mind to be creative. But the mind can be creative only when it is free from conditioning, and such freedom is not easily come by; you have to work extraordinarily hard for it. You work hard for your daily living, you spend years at the whole business of being bossed around in order to earn a livelihood, swallowing the insults, the discomforts, the indignity, the sycophancy. But to work so that the mind is free is much more arduous; it requires great insight, great comprehension, an extensive awareness in which the mind knows all its impediments, its blockages, its movements of self-deception, its fantasies, its illusions, its myths. Once the mind is free, it can begin to investigate, to search out, but for a mind to seek when it is not free has no meaning. Do you understand? The mind which would find truth, God, this extraordinary beauty and depth of life, the fullness of love, must first be free. It has no meaning for a mind that is shaped, conditioned, held within the boundaries of tradition, to say, "I am seeking truth, God." Such a mind is like a donkey tethered to a post: it cannot wander further than the length of its rope.

So, if we want to find out what is this extraordinary state that lies beyond the vagaries of the mind—really experience it, live with it, and know its full meaning—surely there must be freedom, and freedom implies harder work than most of us are willing to undertake. We would rather be led than discover, but one cannot be led to truth. Do please understand this very simple fact. No swami, no system of yoga, no religious organization, no doctrine or belief can lead you to the discovery of truth. Only the free mind can discover. That is obvious, is it not? You cannot discover the truth of anything by merely being told what it is because then the discovery is not yours. If you are merely told what happiness is, is that happiness?

To find out what this life is all about, to know the whole content of it and not just the superficial layers which we call living, to be aware of its joy, its extraordinary depths, its width and beauty, which includes the squalor, the misery, the strife, the degradation—to understand the significance of all that, your mind must obviously be free. If that is clearly understood, then your relationship with me, and my relationship with you, is not based on authority. I cannot lead you to truth, nor can anyone else; you have to discover it every moment of the day as you are living. It is to be found when you are walking in the street or riding in a tramcar, when you are quarreling with your wife or husband, when you are sitting alone or looking at the stars. When you know what is right meditation, then you will find out what is true; but a mind that is prepared, so-called educated, that is conditioned to believe or not to believe, that calls itself a Hindu, a Christian, a communist, a Buddhist—such a mind will never discover what is true, though it may search for a thousand years. So, the important thing is for the mind to be free. And, can the mind ever be free?

Do you understand the problem, sirs? Only the mind that is free can discover what is true—discover, not be told what is true. The description is not the fact. You may describe something in the most lovely language, put it in the most spiritual or lyrical words, but the word is not the fact. When you are hungry, the description of food does not feed you. But most of us are satisfied with the description of truth, and the description, the symbol, has taken the place of the factual. To discover whether there is a reality or not, we must be capable of seeing the true as the true, the false as the false, and not wait to be told like a lot of immature children.

So, to find out what is true, the mind must first be free, and to be free is extraordinarily hard work, harder than all the practices of yoga. Such practices merely condition your mind, and it is only the free mind that can be creative. A conditioned

mind may be inventive; it may think up new ideas, new phrases, new gadgets; it may build a dam, plan a new society, and all the rest of it; but that is not creativity. Creativity is something much more than the mere capacity to acquire a technique. It is because this extraordinary thing called *creativity* is not in most of us that we are so shallow, empty, insufficient. And only the mind that is free can be creative.

So, our problem is: How is the mind to be set free? And, is it possible to set the mind free—not in layers or patches, not in little bits here and there, but totally, right through, the unconscious as well as the conscious? Or, is the mind ever to be conditioned, ever to be shaped? You have to find out for yourself and not wait for me to tell you whether the mind can ever be free. Can the mind only *think* about freedom, as a prisoner does, and so is doomed never to be free but always to be held within the bondage of its conditioning?

Do you understand the problem? Can the mind ever be totally free, or is it the very nature of the mind to be conditioned? If it is the fundamental quality of the mind to be limited, then there is no question of ever finding out what is reality; then you can go on repeating that there is God or there is no God, that this is good and something else is bad, all of which is within the pattern of a given culture. But, to find out the truth of the matter, you have to inquire for yourself into whether the mind can really be free. I say it can be—which is not for you to accept or reject. It may be true, or it may be my opinion, my fancy, my illusion. And you cannot base your life on somebody else's discovery, or on his illusion, his fancy, or on a mere idea. You have to find out.

Madras, 1st Public Talk, December 12, 1956
Collected Works, Vol. X, pp. 164-6

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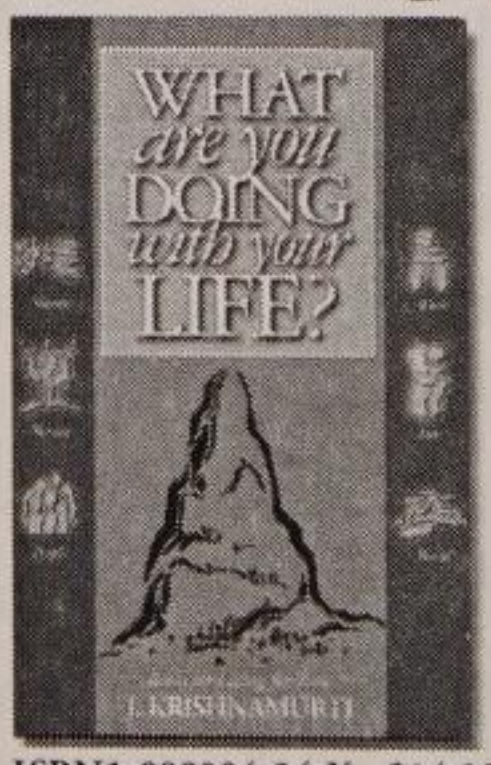

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J. Krishnamurti, *Commentaries on Living*, Series II, Chapter

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